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Urgent Lebanon contacts reported

CAIRO (Agencies) — The French and Egyptian presidents Tuesday agreed to join in international efforts to stop current fighting in Lebanon, a government official said. The Middle East News Agency said the official, whose name it did not name, said the agreement came in a telephone conversation between French President Francois Mitterrand and President Hosni Mubarak. Mitterrand initiated the call, the official said. Mitterrand also discussed the fighting in Lebanon with the leaders of the United States, the Soviet Union and Britain. His spokesman said Tuesday, Mitterrand had spoken "since yesterday" (Monday) to U.S. President George Bush, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid, spokesman Hubert Vohrine said. He reached Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev by telephone Tuesday afternoon and was also due to speak to Spanish leader Felipe Gonzalez. On Monday, Mitterrand discussed the Lebanese crisis in Paris with His Majesty King Hussein who said Arab leaders had to do something to "end this madness." U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar is trying hard to bring about a ceasefire in Lebanon, his spokesman said Tuesday.

EC plans S. Africa talks

BRUSSELS (R) — The European Community (EC) will meet Africa's front-line states in June for what anti-apartheid groups hope will be a fresh drive for sanctions against South Africa. An EC spokesman announced the talks Tuesday at a meeting between EC External Affairs Commissioner Frans Andriessen and community anti-apartheid groups and said they would focus on South Africa and recent developments in the region. The groups, which have criticised the EC for not taking broad sanctions against South Africa, said the announcement showed the EC might be ready to take firmer measures. Foreign ministers from all 12 EC countries and those from Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe will meet in Luxembourg for only the second time. "We decided that, given the general interest in South Africa, as well as signs that the Soviet Union is now making contact with the country, it would be appropriate to have this meeting," the spokesman said. The front-line states accuse Pretoria of waging a campaign of destabilisation against them which cost between \$10 and \$60 billion from 1980 to 1987.

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15 Palestinians shot and wounded Amnesty lambasts Israeli government

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — At least 15 Palestinians were shot and wounded in clashes with Israeli soldiers in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip Tuesday and the London-based Amnesty International human rights group accused the Israeli government of effectively encouraging violence against Palestinians during the 16-month uprising in the occupied territories.

The West Bank and the Gaza Strip were virtually shut down by a general strike called to protest the Israeli army's seizure of Arab-owned cars and their use to make surprise raids on Palestinian villages.

Tuesday's violence followed one of the bloodiest days of the Palestinian uprising.

Six Palestinians died Monday, including two teenagers shot by

soldiers and a man and a woman killed in a family feud in Gaza City's Zaitoun quarter that some reports said erupted over accusations of collaboration with Israel.

Three Palestinians, including a prostitute, were killed overnight in what was described by Reuters as a growing clandestine war against "collaborators" accused of helping Israel's secret police.

Underground leaders of the uprising against Israeli occupation have called in leaflets for the punishment of unrepentant collaborators.

During last night, masked assailants stabbed to death Nadira Zuhdi Al Boulos, 43, and left her mutilated body in an abandoned building in the West Bank city of Nablus, Arab journalists there told Reuters.

They said the woman, a known prostitute, had been seen work-

ing for Israel's Shin Bet service and had tried to recruit young girls to act as informers.

Israel's army radio said local activists went to her house last night, demanded that she confess, and took her away.

In Gaza City, a group of assailants shot dead Fika Ayad, 52, and her son Kamal, 16, at their home after the family resisted their attempts to take away a daughter, Afaf Ayad, 25, accused of cooperating with Shin Bet.

Afaf and two other brothers were shot and wounded in the incident, hospital officials said.

In London, Amnesty International accused the Israeli government of effectively encouraging troops to kill or wound Palestinians during the uprising.

The organisation urged Israel to set up an independent judicial inquiry into "a wide range of human rights violations by security forces."

Amnesty said it was "gravely concerned that senior Israeli authorities appear to have been condoning if not encouraging the excessive use of force by soldiers and border police knowing it would result in the death or injury of Palestinians."

Asked to identify the authorities, an Amnesty spokesman said the reference was to the Israeli government which he said bore ultimate responsibility for any human rights abuses.

He said Amnesty believed government authorities were "in effect encouraging" misuse of force by failing to speak out against excessive violence or issue clear guidelines to soldiers.

"Amnesty International (calls) for clear indications from the highest level of the Israeli government that the improper use of firearms, any other form of excessive use of force and punitive beatings would not be tolerated," the human rights group said in a statement.

Amnesty said it was particularly concerned about the killing of two Palestinian teenagers Monday, a boy aged 10 over the weekend and at least four people during last Thursday's Israeli border police raid on Nablus village (see page 2).

"Israeli forces had killed over 400 Palestinians in the occupied territories since the intifada began in December 1987 by shootings and beatings and in tear-gas related incidents," Amnesty said.



HM King Hussein



George Bush

U.N. reopens debate on Palestine today

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — The U.N. General Assembly, in a surprise move Tuesday, agreed to reopen debate on "the question of Palestine."

The assembly president, Argentine Foreign Minister Dante Caputo, said the 159-member body would take up the question Wednesday. He invited delegates who wished to speak in the debate to submit their names during the day.

He said a request for the discussion was submitted by Saudi Arabia on behalf of the group of Arab states.

There were reports earlier that the observer mission of Palestine might take the question to the Security Council.

The assembly last debated the situation in December, when meetings were held in Geneva so that Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat might attend and address the world body. He was denied a visa to come to New York.

The assembly had already scheduled a meeting for Tuesday, to elect a judge for the World Court, and diplomats said it was a relatively simple matter to extend the session to take up the Palestine question.

Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar will not be present. He left New York at the weekend to begin a two-week visit to Europe.

The U.N. chief said Tuesday the international community must show it is starting to make a serious attempt to resolve Middle East problems.

Confirming that he would meet Arafat in Geneva on Thursday, Perez de Cuellar said he would discuss the situation in Lebanon and in the Israeli-occupied territories in talks with government leaders Tuesday.

The U.N. chief was to meet Britain's Margaret Thatcher, Soviet Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov, and French Prime Minister Michel Rocard during Luxembourg independence celebrations.

"The international community must send a message of hope to all countries in the Middle East... that we are beginning to try seriously to resolve the problems throughout the Middle East," Perez de Cuellar told a news conference.

PLO to reject U.S. guarantees for polls

TUNIS (Agencies) — U.S. guarantees could not persuade the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) to endorse elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip under Israeli occupation, a Palestinian leader was quoted Tuesday as saying.

Salah Khalaf (Abu Iyad) told the Tunisian newspaper Al Shurouq that he expected the United States to propose elections in the occupied territories at talks with the PLO within two weeks.

"They will bring up the elections idea, like the plan of (Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak) Shamir. We are not against elections in the West Bank and Gaza, but not in the shadow of the occupation," he said.

Asked if the PLO would modify its position if Washington offered guarantees for elections, he said: "Impossible. The Shamir plan is based on the concept of autonomy and the Palestinian people has said its word, through the intifada and by declaring the Palestinian state."

"We will show the Americans that it is a plot hatched by Shamir to gain time and we will explain to them that we have experience of elections under occupation."

Elections were held in the occupied territories in 1976 but Israel later sacked or expelled many of the elected officials. Others were killed or maimed by bombs.

Washington has said that Shamir's proposal for elections is purely a ploy. The PLO's official position is that voting can take place only under U.N. supervision after Israeli troops withdraw.

Abu Iyad, deputy to PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat in the mainstream Fatah movement, said Fatah had not abandoned resistance operations against Israel but believed the intifada had priority.

"The right time must be chosen for operations so that they serve our political objectives," he said.

"We call for operations which are effective and significant and at present we think that continuing

Shamir visits Hungary

Shamir, who arrived in Budapest late Monday on an unscheduled visit, Tuesday conferred with Hungarian Communist Party chief Karoly Grosz, and a spokesman said Hungary had announced a go-between role in the Mideast conflict.

The actual purpose of the visit by Shamir, who was expected to depart later Tuesday, was not announced, but an Israeli radio broadcast said the two states apparently planned to renew diplomatic ties.

"Hungary was agreed to act as a mediator and will try to persuade all parties concerned in the Middle East crisis to sit down to the negotiating table," Foreign Ministry spokesman Istvan Komoroczki was quoted as saying.

There was no elaboration, but Hungary may be taking over the role that was long attributed to Romanian President Nicolae Ceausescu as the leader of the only Warsaw Pact country that did not sever relations with Israel during the 1967 war.

Hungary has indicated that Israel would have to soften its opposition to an international peace conference on the Middle East if relations were to be resumed.

Hungary told Arafat during a visit last month that it was willing to organise such a conference.

Hungarian Deputy Foreign Minister Laszlo Kovacs told Israel, during a visit from April 12 to 16, of Hungary's desire for the Zionist state to change its attitude on how to resolve the Middle East conflict.

"From the Hungarian side, it was emphasised that bilateral relations could be promoted considerably if the current Israeli trade barriers were abolished, and by a shift in Israel's attitude towards solving the crisis in the region," said the Hungarian news agency MTI.

King meets U.S. president today

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — His Majesty King Hussein Wednesday meets U.S. President George Bush for talks on the Middle East situation and efforts to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict through a just and comprehensive settlement to the Palestinian problem.

The King, accompanied by Her Majesty Queen Noor, His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah, Prime Minister Zaid Rifai and a high-level delegation, began a visit to the U.S. late Monday after flying in from Paris where the King held talks with French President Francois Mitterrand.

Their Majesties were received upon arrival at Andrews air force base by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, other senior Bush administration officials, Jordan's ambassador to the U.S. and heads of Arab diplomatic missions in Washington as well as Jordan's permanent delegate to the United Nations.

In addition to President Bush, the King will also meet with several American congressmen.

The delegation accompanying the King includes Royal Court Chief Field Marshal Sharif Zaid Ibn Shaker, the King's special and political advisors and Deputy Prime Minister Marwan Al Qasem.

King Hussein is the third Middle East leader to visit Washington in the past two weeks as part of an effort by the new Bush administration to revive the Middle East peace process.

"At the minimum what we'd like from the King is an understanding of how we're proceeding

right now," a senior administration official told Reuters recently.

"What we're really asking for is that he give us a chance to develop what is a step-by-step approach," he added.

The King's talks with Bush follow separate talks with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, was quoted as saying Monday that the King's visit to Washington was in full coordination with Egypt and the PLO.

Arab League talks set for Friday

Thousands flee Beirut blitzkrieg

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Thousands of shell-shocked residents fled Beirut Tuesday to escape the worst artillery bombardments in living memory on the Lebanese capital.

In Kuwait, Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah announced that the Arab League will hold an emergency session Friday on the fighting in Lebanon.

Sheikh Sabah said that more than two-thirds of the league's 22 members had agreed their foreign ministers will attend the session at its headquarters in Tunis.

Ceasefire appeals by the league have so far been ignored by the combatants in Lebanon.

There was no immediate confirmation of a report that United Nations Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar had urged France to bolster the league's efforts for a ceasefire in Lebanon by launching an international peace initiative.

Police said eight people were killed and 43 wounded as the divided capital's population huddled in underground bunkers and bomb shelters for the third straight night while the fierce bombardment thundered above them.

The casualties raised the toll from six weeks of fighting to at least 270 killed and 975 wounded. By police count, 53 people have been killed and 218 wounded in almost non-stop artillery and rocket exchanges since sundown Saturday.

The bombardment slackened at daybreak into intermittent exchanges between mainly Christian army units loyal to Michel Aoun, the army commander, and an alliance of militiamen and Syrian troops.

Cars piled with mattresses and other belongings clogged the main coastal highway as Beirut residents sought a measure of security in South Lebanon after shelling duels died away at dawn.

A motor boat ferried about 70 civilian casualties to the French hospital ship La Rance three miles off the southern port of Sidon.

Ferry service on

In the port of Jounieh north of Beirut, eyewitnesses quoted by Reuters said hundreds of panicked Christians boarded small motor launches to reach a ferry plying between Lebanon and the Cypriot port of Larnaca.

There had been fears that the ferry service might be suspended after rockets smashed into the crowded port Monday night.

But Larnaca port sources said the ferries Baroness and Larnaca Rose would continue to operate, each loading up to 1,000 passengers from small boats 10 miles off the coast.

The Baroness had cancelled its trip Monday after shells almost smashed into it as it left Jounieh harbour Sunday at full speed with its anchor still trailing. But it sailed for Lebanon again

Tuesday.

At least 100,000 of Beirut's 1.5 million residents have fled to South Lebanon.

Many people were speechless, and in tears when they emerged from corridors and dank shelters Tuesday after another sleepless night punctuated by the crash of shells and the cries of terrified children.

Rightist call

Some 23 members of parliament held a five-hour meeting at the seat of the Maronite Christian church in the east Beirut suburb of Bkirki.

They issued a statement calling for "an immediate and general ceasefire and the return of the language of reason and dialogue."

"All sides should adhere to the ceasefire and the Lebanese army should be responsible for implementing it in areas under its control, while the Syrian army should be responsible for implementing it in areas under its control."

The deputies appealed to the Arab League, the European Community, the U.N. Security Council and its permanent members "to interfere urgently in any effective way they can to stop the collective massacres and the destructive and barbaric war against Lebanon and its people."

The statement appreciated peace efforts by the Arab League but urged it to speed up its work.

Supply convoy reaches Kabul

KABUL (R) — A big convoy of vital Soviet arms and food supplies broke through a Mujahedeen blockade and rumbled into Kabul Tuesday in the biggest operation of its kind since Moscow's troops left Afghanistan two months ago.

Helicopter gunships flew overhead as columns of tanks, armoured cars, mounted multiple rocket launchers and food trucks reached the capital after running a gauntlet of guerrillas dug in on mountains dominating the Salang Highway.

Drivers said the convoy of up to 1,000 armoured vehicles and at least 500 trucks packed with rice, flour and wheat took 45 days to get from the Soviet border — normally, a three-day journey.

Their arrival was a significant victory for the Kabul government which has fought a powerful Mujahedeen alliance on its own since the last Soviet troops pulled out Feb. 15.

The new hardware will boost the morale and morale of government forces battling rebel offensive in eastern and southern Afghan provinces bordering Pakistan.

The convoy was caught up in fierce battles with Mujahedeen determined to starve Kabul into surrender.

Botha wants faster SWAPO withdrawal

CAPE TOWN (R) — The South-West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) is risking the Namibian independence plan by delaying the withdrawal of its guerrillas to Angola, South African Foreign Minister P. W. Botha said Tuesday.

Botha told reporters in Cape Town that about half the surviving SWAPO guerrillas had returned to Angola after crossing into Namibia April 1.

But he said the rest, roughly estimated at about 600 men, should leave Namibia soon to avoid delaying U.N.-supervised independence elections scheduled for the first week of November.

"As time passes, we will come to a situation where we must ask if the time schedules are still viable. That is why all parties concerned must go out of their way to get SWAPO back (to Angola)."

He said a readjustment of the timetable could jeopardise the whole independence plan for Namibia.

SWAPO President Sam Nujoma Monday called on the United Nations to ask South Africa to withdraw its forces in Namibia to their bases and allow SWAPO guerrillas to pull out unhindered.

Nujoma said a division of South African troops deployed along the Angola-Namibia border was patrolling the frontier and mounting ambushes around special assembly points set up by the U.N. to receive the guerrillas.

He said the South African deployment was making it practically impossible for guerrillas to

reach the assembly points for transport to Angola.

Botha said the six South African-led battalions released from confinement to base to fight the SWAPO incursion would not be ordered back to their bases until the rebel withdrawal was complete.

He said he would not enforce a tentative Friday deadline for the withdrawal of all SWAPO fighters from northern Namibia.

But he said the last of the guerrillas should be out by the time the joint commission of South African, Cuban and Angolan negotiators ends a two-day meeting in Cape Town Friday next week.

An estimated 1,600 SWAPO rebels entered Namibia April 1 in defiance of an hours-old ceasefire and international plans for the territory's independence after 73 years of South African rule.

At least 278 guerrillas and 27 government troops died in eight days of all-out war and in subsequent skirmishes that broke out despite an internationally agreed plan for the withdrawal of SWAPO rebels under U.N. protection.

Meanwhile, the first three SWAPO guerrillas to return to Angola under U.N. supervision were escorted to the border by Kenyan peacekeeping troops Tuesday.

Only seven guerrillas have so far handed themselves over to U.N. forces.

The three were taken from a hospital in northern Namibia to the border at Ruacana, where they were handed over to Angolan authorities.

Sheffield disaster probe opens; fatalities rise to 95

LONDON (Agencies) — The government Tuesday opened its inquiry into Britain's worst sports disaster, as the number of fatalities rose to 95 with the death of a teenage soccer fan.

Sir Peter Taylor, a lord justice of appeal heading the government-ordered investigation, said he wanted to ensure similar tragedies never occurred again.

A 14-year-old boy, visited Monday by Prince Charles and Princess Diana, in a Sheffield hospital Tuesday, officials said, raising the death toll from the soccer stadium disaster to 95.

Of the 170 people injured in Saturday in Sheffield, 25 were still hospitalised, including 19 in intensive care.

A newspaper report Tuesday suggested the disaster may have been caused by a police officer's attempt to prevent a fatal accident among fans pressing to get into Sheffield's Hillsborough Stadium.

Inquests into the deaths of 50 fans also opened Tuesday in Sheffield before South Yorkshire Coroner Dr. Stefan Popper. Before reading the list of names, he expressed sympathy to the relatives. But he said he would make no comment about the incident.

Sir Harry Livermore, a former lord mayor of Liverpool who was representing six families, told the coroner that Jacques Georges, Europe's top soccer official, would never be forgiven for calling English soccer fans beasts.

The Switzerland-based Georges, president of the European Union of Football Associations (UEFA), apologised for the remark after angry protests from English soccer officials and a call earlier Tuesday from Home Secretary Douglas Hurd for a retraction.

But Livermore said: "Liverpool at the moment is a heart-broken city. The tragedy will never be forgotten or forgiven, nor will the remark of Mr. Georges, however many times he may apologise."

Newspaper reports indicated the deaths may have been caused by a police officer's attempt to prevent a fatal accident among fans pressing to get into Sheffield's Hillsborough Stadium.

In Liverpool, writs were filed in high court alleging negligence or breach of duty against South Yorkshire police and the Sheffield Wednesday soccer club. The writs, filed on behalf of nine injured Liverpool fans, sought

damages for personal injuries.

Police have said there was no spectator violence at Hillsborough and newspapers carried accounts of how Nottingham Forest fans helped those from Liverpool climb over security fences on to the field.

Government officials have said they will consider forcing soccer clubs to replace traditional standing-only terraces with seating in the antiquated stadiums where most teams play.

Officials and fans accused police of letting thousands of fans into the stadium late and then responding too slowly when the late-comers crashed fans already inside against the three-metre-high fence.

The Times of London said Tuesday that Police Superintendent Roger Marshall ordered the late Liverpool arrivals to be let in because he feared they would force the collapse of a wall next to the gate.

The Football Association gave the go-ahead Monday to continue with the cup competition. But the Liverpool team decided at a meeting Tuesday to postpone for one week a decision on whether to participate in any more cup games this year.

Political uncertainty hangs over prospects for Iran-Iraq talks

By Eric Hall
Reuters

DUBAI — Political upheaval in Tehran has clouded prospects for Iran-Iraq peace talks due to reopen in Geneva Thursday, officials and diplomats in the Gulf say.

They predict few concrete results from the fourth round of the U.N.-sponsored negotiations which began after a ceasefire in the eight-year Gulf war last Aug. 20.

"We are not optimistic that the Iranians are in a position to be more decisive or to change their attitude and start talking directly to us," Iraq's Foreign Ministry Under-Secretary Nizar Hamdoun told Reuters in Baghdad recently. Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati, who said Monday he was hopeful over the talks, will lack two members of his main negotiating team when he meets Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz.

Velayati's Deputy Mohammad Javad Larjani and Iran's U.N. Ambassador Mohammad Jafar Mahallati resigned after spiritual leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini fired his designated successor, Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri, last month.

The purge was seen as a move by Khomeini to reimpose strict Islamic principles to stop what he saw as creeping liberalism. The move together with the row over Khomeini's death threats against British author Salman Rushdie for blaspheming Islam, have increased Iran's diplomatic isolation since the last peace talks in New York in February.

"(Velayati) will be cautious of initiatives with conditions at home very fluid. He will feel he has little political support. Iraq will probably talk tough and try to take advantage," said one Middle East official.

The sticking points are Iraqi demands for the reopening of the Shatt Al Arab border waterway and the exchange of prisoners of war, and Tehran's insistence on the prior withdrawal of Iraqi troops from up to 2,600 square kilometres of Iranian territory.

There was some hope for a possible further agreement on exchanging sick and wounded prisoners of war (PoWs) out of an estimated 100,000 PoWs held by both sides.

But a Western diplomat in Baghdad said there had been no progress in the peace process since it began. "Iraq wants the Shatt cleared and its prisoners of war back before withdrawal. Iran wants the Iraqis to withdraw before they will talk about anything else. Both sides want a change in the other's position."

"The Iraqis must decide eventually whether to pursue the peace talk or flex their muscles," the diplomat said, adding that Baghdad did not believe the Iranian negotiators were able to speak with authority.

Iranian President Ali Khamenei last week thought it necessary to confirm government support for Velayati.

The Foreign Ministry, which is to represent (Iran) at such important and fateful negotiations, should feel it has the confidence of the leadership, officials, and people."

Western diplomats in the Gulf said Iran's apparent return to an isolationist policy had sparked a shift toward Iraq by Western policy-makers, reversing an earlier trend.

The fighting ended when Iran accepted U.N. Resolution 598 calling for a ceasefire, a withdrawal to internationally recognised borders and the exchange of all prisoners.

Implementing the resolution has been another matter. A diplomat in Baghdad said the military situation was stable apart from shelling outbreaks near Iraq's southern port of Basra caused by Iranian attempts to flood Iraqi forward positions and Iraqi countermeasures.

A well-informed source said the flooding was a major problem and the shelling could have got out of hand without the presence of the team of U.N. observers (UNIMOG) monitoring the truce.

"Recent violations are not a threat to the ceasefire... but they were greater in extent and longer in time with more weapons used, and we are worried," U.N. envoy Marrack Gouding said in Baghdad last month.

A Western diplomat in Baghdad, however, said there was no indication either side wanted to resume the war.



An angry Palestinian confronts Israeli soldiers over the delay in retrieving his identity card after checks in occupied Jerusalem.

Nahalin villagers say Israelis snipped at them during raid

By Mary Seider
The Associated Press

NAHALIN, occupied West Bank — Two Israeli border police fired indiscriminately from a second-storey window were blamed by residents of this West Bank village Monday for killing Palestinian youths in one of the bloodiest incidents of the Palestinian uprising.

A West Bank human rights group said it had appealed to signatories of the Fourth Geneva Convention, including the United States, for international protection for Palestinians as a result of the confrontation last Thursday.

Four Palestinians were killed and dozens wounded in the village of Nahalin, about seven kilometres southwest of Bethlehem. A fifth villager was reported to be brain dead by doctors at Jerusalem's Makassed hospital.

"We can only describe what happened as a planned massacre against a village that was not guilty of any crime deserving of such a punishment," said villager Mustafa Abu Adnan.

The shooting touched off protests throughout the occupied territories and drew condemnation from human rights groups, including the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). To Palestinians, the Nahalin killings have become a symbol of their determination to press their nationalist cause and evidence of the brutality of Israel's military occupation.

The army has ordered an investigation into the incident. An army official said Monday preliminary findings indicated "excessive use of firearms, faulty planning and bad execution" by paramilitary border police who

carried out the operation. However, he denied the incident was premeditated.

An army spokesman said after the raid that border police entered the village of 3,500 before dawn to apprehend residents responsible for throwing stones at Israeli cars. He said troops opened fire when they were met with a barrage of stones.

Villagers told the Associated Press the violence began around 5 a.m. when about 22 jeeps of troops carried out house-to-house searches, firing indiscriminately as many residents emerged from dawn prayers during Ramadan.

"They shot at anything that moved — dogs, donkeys, people cars," said Naim Shakarchi, whose brother Suhel was among those killed. "Anyone who came out of his house took a bullet."

Majed Najajari said he was awakened by the shooting. "I looked from my bedroom window and saw a border police spraying bullets at the houses along the road," said the 29-year-old labourer.

Najajari showed an AP reporter two bullet holes in the window and on the concrete wall of the bedroom, where he said his six small children had been sleeping on mats on the floor.

A metal water tank and boiler on the roof were riddled with bullet holes. Residents fished out dozens of spent copper-coated lead slugs inside the tank and showed them to reporters.

The neighbouring home of Salam Mustafa Najajari had bullet holes in the metal door, a gas heater and on a wall.

Villagers said the worst violence occurred outside the Az-Zahra Mosque where worshippers poured into the streets and began

pelting troops with rocks when they heard the sound of gunfire.

They said two border policemen firing from the second-storey window of a building across the street from the mosque were responsible for killing three Palestinians and wounding a number of others.

According to residents, the three deaths occurred within about 20 metres of each other. The villagers showed the AP the sites of the three deaths — a spot on the roof of a low building, a smear of blood on a slab of rocks and a wall adjacent to the mosque. The men were in their late teens and early 20s.

A fourth Palestinian was killed in a cemetery across the street from the mosque, the villagers said.

Fatneh Ibrahim Abu Mor, 28, who owns the building the border police fired from, said the troops ordered her to let them in, then climbed to the second floor, which is under construction and uninhabited.

"They went to the window and started shooting," said Abu Mor, adding that she found more than a dozen spent cartridges on the cement floor afterward.

Rajah Shehadeh, a director of law in the Service of Man, the West Bank affiliate of the Geneva-based International Commission of Jurists, said the incident in Nahalin constituted "willful killing and bodily harm."

He told a news conference Monday that the group has appealed to signatories of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which protects populations under occupation, to "meet their clear obligation" to ensure the international statute is observed.

Bahrain opens links with China

BAHRAIN (AP) — Bahrain said Tuesday it was establishing diplomatic relations with China and Arab diplomats said Saudi Arabia will soon do so as well.

The Bahrain Foreign Ministry said in a statement the decision underlined a "desire to foster the bonds of friendship and cooperation" between Manama and Beijing.

It said the move was also designed to develop bilateral ties "to serve mutual interests on the basis of reciprocal respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, peaceful coexistence, equality and non-interference in the internal affairs" of both countries.

Saudi Arabia is the only state in the Gulf region that has not established diplomatic ties with either Beijing or Moscow.

But trade relations have existed for years and have been developing rapidly. Beijing last year supplied the Saudis with intermediate-range CSS-2 ballistic missiles.

China and Saudi Arabia exchanged high-level trade delegations recently. A Chinese mission was recently in Saudi Arabia looking for premises to

open a trade office, the first by a communist nation in the kingdom.

Arab diplomatic sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the Saudis were expected to exchange diplomatic ties with Beijing in the near future.

The Soviet Union is awaiting a signal from Saudi Arabia to open ties, according to recent Soviet statements following the Soviet military withdrawal from Afghanistan in February.

Saudi Arabia, which supports the Mujahideen who have been fighting the Soviets and the Kabul regime, had repeatedly dropped hints that the pullout would bolster prospects for establishing diplomatic relations between Riyadh and Moscow.

Saudi Arabia and Bahrain are linked with Kuwait, Qatar, Oman and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

Kuwait, which established ties with East bloc countries after independence from Britain in 1961, had been urging its GCC partners to do likewise.

Oman and the UAE followed suit in the mid-1980s and Qatar last year.

Israel wants to separate Arab conflict from Palestinian issue

CAIRO (R) — Israel wants to settle its conflict with individual Arab states in order to deal later with the Palestinian problem, according to a senior Israeli official.

"What we want to do is to defuse the regional aspect of our conflict with the Arabs by concluding more and more arrangements with other countries so we are faced only with the Palestinian problem," said foreign ministry director-general Reuven Merhav.

"This will then bring the problem to its real proportion," he told reporters at his hotel before heading back to Israel late Monday.

Merhav, who arrived in Cairo

last week, Monday continued talks with Egyptian Foreign Minister Esmat Abdul Maguid on the situation on the occupied territories.

Merhav urged Iraq and Saudi Arabia to end more than 40 years of enmity towards Israel.

"In the Middle East, the situation is abnormal," Merhav said. "What we would like is to bring Iraq close to us, get its support and normalise relations or get to some kind of peaceful arrangement."

The same with Saudi Arabia which is a major force in the Arab World. We think it should declare clear and loud that it is no longer in a technical state of war with us," said Merhav.

"Together we can reach some kind of agreement for peace in the region."

Merhav said he did not know how the two countries could reach peace with Israel, but suggested the steps to reconciliation should come from the Arabs.

Merhav also said Egypt offered help in locating the missing bodies of 19 soldiers lost in the 1973 war.

Merhav also disclosed he had conveyed an invitation to Abdul Meguid to visit Israel. An Egyptian foreign ministry source, who demanded anonymity, said Abdul Meguid accepted the invitation but no date has been set for the visit.



Adnan Khashoggi

Swiss police arrest Adnan Khashoggi

BERNE (R) — Swiss police Tuesday arrested Saudi Arabian businessman Adnan Khashoggi at the request of U.S. authorities, the Swiss Justice and Police Department said.

Khashoggi, 53, amassed one of the largest personal fortunes in the world by playing middle man in the transfer of Western arms and technology to Arab oil states.

A ministry announcement said Khashoggi was charged with "illegal property dealings," including with real estate owned by

former Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos and his wife and valuable paintings that disappeared from Manila's metropolitan museum after Marcos went into exile in February 1986.

The arrest warrant was issued by U.S. Magistrate Naomi Buchwald March 24, according to the announcement. Charges against Khashoggi were filed March 9 by the U.S. district court for the southern district of New York, it said.

After his arrest, Khashoggi was taken to the district jail in downtown Bern.

Under the extradition treaty between the United States and Switzerland, the U.S. authorities have up to 60 days in which to make a formal request for extradition, the department added.

Once an extradition request is made, Khashoggi will have up to 10 days to lodge an appeal with the Swiss federal supreme court, the department said.

Last November Switzerland agreed to give U.S. authorities the records of some financial transactions made by Marcos and his family for use in a fraud and racketeering case against them.

Manila has also lodged numerous requests for information on Marcos's bank accounts in Switzerland. These requests are slowly making their way through the Swiss judicial system. All decisions reached so far have gone against Marcos.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 77311-19

PROGRAMME ONE

15:30 Koran
15:45 Programme review
15:45 Children's programmes
17:15 Programme on plants
17:30 Out of World
18:00 News summary in Arabic
18:05 Cairo News Message
18:15 Arabic series
19:00 Local programme
19:30 Common mistakes
20:00 Programme review
20:30 News in Arabic
21:30 Arabic series
22:10 Wreeding
23:00 News summary in Arabic

PROGRAMME TWO

18:00 Documentary
19:00 News in French
19:15 Aujourd'hui en Jordanie
19:30 News in Arabic
20:00 Life with Lucy
21:10 Documentary
22:00 News in English
22:20 The Allen Years

PRAYER TIMES

03:36 Fair
04:58 (Sunrise) Doha
11:35 Dhahr
15:12 'Asr

CHURCHES

18:11 Maghreb
19:33 'Isha
St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweith, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel.
632785
St. Joseph Church, Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel.
637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terzianita Church Tel. 623366
Church of the Annunciation Tel.
635541
Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel.
628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel.
71331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel.
75261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 717151
Armenian International Church Tel.
685326
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel.
635541
Rainbow Congregation Tel. 822605
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-
Day Saints Tel. 815817, 81264

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
Another rise in temperatures will occur and winds will be easterly mod-

erate to fresh sometimes. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Amman 8 / 29
Aqaba 17 / 31
Dera'a 8 / 30
Jordan Valley 16 / 34

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 27, Aqaba 29. Humidity readings: Amman 18 per cent, Aqaba 38 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Avni Hawandeh 777665
Dr. Youssef Rashid 896301
Dr. Munther Qaqish 898101
Dr. Adel Amman 812148
First pharmacy 661912
Refugee pharmacy 720336
Al Asmaa pharmacy 637055
Nairoukh pharmacy 626372
Al Asmaa pharmacy 649945
Yacoub pharmacy 637660
Smeitani pharmacy 637660

IRBID:
Dr. Mohammad Ta'ani (—)
Al Sharaa pharmacy (985238)

ZARQA:
Dr. Musa Odah (—)
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 630341
Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 611111, 637777
Fire Brigade 62209093
Blood Bank 771521
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 65699491
Public Security Department 656000 / 655111
Hotel Complaints 608800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467

AMMAN Municipality 787111
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 72
Overseas Calls 17
Central Amman Telephone 623818
Repairs 623818
Abdullah Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 880100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power 636381
Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 06-53200

Queen Alia Int. Airport, 06-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khakhi Maternity, J. Amn 644281/6
Al-Hilal Maternity, J. Amn 644281/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642562
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 669131
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 848485
Al-Musader Hospital 667279
The Islamic, Abdali 666127/77
Al-Ahli, Abdali 666154/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 775111/26
Army, Marja 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 6224050
Amal Hospital 674155

ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)991071
Jabal Amman Maternity (09)986732
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)755555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)722775
Jabal Al-Nafisah Hospital (02)247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)914111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Queen Alia Int. Airport, 06-53200

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (06)532005, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

09:10 Damascus (RJ)
09:10 Aqaba (RJ)
09:30 Cairo (RJ)
09:45 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:00 Dhahran, Kuwait (RJ)
10:15 London, Vienna (RJ)
10:30 Los Angeles, Chicago, Vienna (RJ)
17:00 Riyadh (RJ)
17:05 Paris (RJ)
17:20 New York, Vienna (RJ)
17:45 London, Geneva (RJ)
17:55 Brussels, Frankfurt (RJ)
18:30 Madrid, Rome (RJ)
19:45 Belgrade, Bucharest (RJ)
09:20 Baghdad (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

09:35 Cairo, London (BA)
07:35 Larnaca, Zurich (SR)
18:30 Cairo (MS)
18:30 Rome (AZ)
11:00 Baghdad (LN)
13:15 Jeddah, Sana'a (TV)
13:30 Baghdad (IA)

09:35 Kuwait (KU)
14:10 Istanbul, Ankara (TK)
14:25 New York, Vienna (RJ)
18:25 Tipoli, Damascus (TK)
23:25 Tunis (TU)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:55 Aqaba (RJ)
10:05 Belgrade, Bucharest (RJ)
11:30 Riyadh (RJ)
11:30 Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
12:00 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
12:00 Geneva, London (RJ)
19:15 Calcutta (RJ)
19:40 Kuwait, Dhahran (RJ)
20:10 Baghdad (RJ)
20:15 Jeddah (RJ)
20:20 Cairo (RJ)
20:30 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
21:00 Damascus (RJ)
21:15 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
22:00 Bangkok (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

05:30 Cairo, London (BA)
07:35 Larnaca, Zurich (SR)
18:30 Cairo (MS)
18:30 Rome (AZ)
11:00 Baghdad (LN)
13:15 Jeddah, Sana'a (TV)
13:30 Baghdad (IA)

14:35 Kuwait (KU)
15:10 Istanbul, Ankara (TK)
17:40 Medina, Jeddah (SV)
19:25 Sana'a (LJ)
21:00 Karachi (PK)
01:00 Dubai (TU)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Almond 600 / 500
Apple 500 / 400
Banana 350 / 300
Banana (Mukannas) 300 / 250
Beans 340 / 280
Broad beans 130 / 100
Cabbage 80 / 50
Carrots 180 / 120
Cauliflower 200 / 150
Cucumbers 200 / 160
Dates 450 / 400
Eggplant 240 / 180
Garlic 300 / 250
Lemon 370 / 300
Lettuce (per one) 90 / 60
Marrow (large) 50 / 30
Marrow (small) 90 / 60
Orange (Shamouti) 370 / 300
Orange (local) 370 / 300
Onion (dry) 120 / 100
Onion (green) 120 / 80
Pepper (hot) 280 / 200
Pepper (sweet) 320 / 280
Pistachio 120 / 100
Spinach 1400 / 1000
Tomatoes 520 / 400

EC grants Jordan JD 2.35 million

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan has obtained a grant of four million European Currency Units (ECUs) (nearly JD 2.35 million) from the European Community (EC) to help it carry out soil survey and classification projects, according to an agreement signed here Tuesday.

The project, prepared by the Ministry of Agriculture in cooperation with the Royal Jordanian Geographic Centre will provide the country with a tool to protect its soil and increase food production, according to a statement by the Ministry of Agriculture. The project entails wide agricultural production expansions in rain-fed regions and areas irrigated by river water.

The statement said that the grant is part of the European Community assistance programme to Jordan under the second and third protocols signed in 1982 and 1987.

Under the terms of the protocols Jordan will get ECUs 203 million in total financial assistance within a five year programme. In February 1989 the European Community granted Jordan JD 1.3 million to help finance feasibility studies and prepare final designs for the construction of the Waleh Nakhileh Dam at the Mujib River in the southern region of the country. The grant was included in the second and third protocols.

Last week the European Investment Bank (EIB) granted Jordan JD 1.5 million loan to help boost the potential of its small and medium-scale revenue generating investments. The loan will be used through the Cities and Villages Development Bank which would in turn lend the money to municipalities and village councils.

The agreement for the new grant was signed at the Ministry of Planning by Minister Taher Kanaan and European Community delegate to Jordan Christian Falkowski.



Minister of Planning Taher Kanaan (centre) and EC delegate Christian Falkowski (second from left) Tuesday sign an agreement at the Ministry of Planning whereby the EC grants Jordan JD 2.35 million (Petra photo).

WHO mission arrives

AMMAN (J.T.) — A fact-finding mission from the World Health Organisation (WHO) arrived here via Ramtha Tuesday on a two-day visit to Jordan.

The mission sent here upon directives from the WHO director general will hold meetings with Jordanian officials to hear a briefing on the health situation in the occupied Arab territories. The mission which is on a tour of the Middle East countries in the course of its investigations will discuss with Jordanian officials ways to improve the deteriorating health conditions of the Palestinian people under Israeli rule.

Last year, an East Mediterranean regional health conference was held in Geneva to discuss the general health conditions in the Israeli-held Arab territories. The conference underlined the responsibility of WHO towards providing health care to the Palestinian people under Israeli rule.

The conference requested that WHO director general follow up the question of ensuring health care for the Palestinian people and to arrange with the Israeli authorities to allow a team of experts in health affairs to visit the occupied regions and investigate the health conditions of its inhabitants.

According to latest reports, the health conditions in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip deteriorated due to Israel's refusal to allow Arab hospitals to acquire advanced equipment in retaliation for the ongoing intifada.

Jordan has been spearheading efforts at the world organisation to provide help to improve health conditions for the Palestinian people under Israeli rule.

Physicians for schools

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Education has embarked on arrangements with private schools in Jordan to employ physicians to take care of the students' health, according to a report in Al Dustour daily.

The report said that the ministry is taking the measure in cooperation with the union of private schools in the country. According to the report schools with insufficient number of students will have to share clinics and the doctors' services within the same district.

It said that the application of new regulations concerning school doctors will take effect as of the beginning of the 1989-1990 scholastic year.

NATIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

CONGRATULATIONS: Jordan's Ambassador to Tunisia Talaat Sa'at Al Hassan Tuesday discussed with the Tunisian Foreign Minister Abdul Hamid Al Sheikh bilateral relations and conveyed to him the congratulations of Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Marwan Al Qasem on his re-election as foreign minister (Petra).

WORKSHOP: The "Hay Hamlan" Community Centre's workshop Tuesday embarked on a programme to produce items that are on demand in the local market. Khalil Al Banna, director of the workshop said in a statement that the items which include clothes, knit wear, ceramics, artificial flowers, and other items are being produced by local women working under the supervision of experts. The programme has been started, he said, in order to offer local families the chance to increase their income. Banna said that the workshop's operations are being supported by the Ministry of Social Development (Petra).

MEETING: The Jordanian Pakistani Friendship Society's general assembly meets Wednesday at the Ministry of Energy's assembly hall to discuss the financial and administrative reports. The society includes 72 members from all walks of life (Al Ra'i).

DEMOLITION: Greater Amman Mayor Abdul Ra'uf Al Rawabdeh has announced that the municipality will demolish 20 stores in the heart of Amman following 'Eid Al Fitr (fast-breaking feast). The stores were built in 1910 in the old vegetable market (Al Ra'i).

EDUCATION: Ministry of Education Secretary General Munther Masri Tuesday delivered a lecture about the educational march in Jordan and noted the importance of the new educational development plan. In his lecture at the Royal Cadets School, Masri outlined the ministry's future plans in the area of preparation and training of teachers. He also emphasised the ministry's interest in providing proper school buildings (Petra).

REGISTRATION: The University of Jordan's admission and registration department has embarked on registration of students for the summer semester, which starts by the end of June, dean of the summer and private studies Abdul Rahman Adas said Tuesday. Adas added that Jordanian students studying inside and outside Jordan, according to the credit hour system, can register at the university for the summer semester (Petra).

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ An art exhibition displaying paintings by children at the Housing Bank Complex.
- ★ An art exhibition by French artist Jean-Francois Noble at Haya Arts Centre.

RAMADAN SOUQ

- ★ Ramadan open-air market, which includes foodstuffs, clothes, home appliances and children's toys at Mahatta, eastern Amman.
- ★ International Ramadan Souq, in which 14 Arab and Islamic countries are taking part, at the International Auto Centre, Queen Abla International Airport Highway.

FOLKLORE

- ★ Performances by folk groups depicting traditional songs and dances at the Roum Amphitheatre down town Amman after 11 p.m.

No change on PTC bus fares

AMMAN (Petra, J.T.) — There will be no increases on fares for travel by buses owned and operated by the Public Transport Corporation (PTC) despite the latest increases in the price of fuel, according to an announcement by Minister of Transport and Telecommunications Khaled Al Haj Hassan Tuesday.

The minister told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that the government will continue to subsidise public transport buses to help limited income family groups in Jordan.

Haj Hassan announced that the Ministry of Transport had been conducting a revision on the fares on other forms of transport in the light of the increases in the price of petrol, kerosene and diesel oil, and that consultations were held with unions of taxi owners, land travel agents and truck owners to reach an acceptable agreement on the amount of increase in their fares.

The minister noted that agreement was reached on increases and details will be later published in the local press. On April 16, the government announced increases in the price of all forms of fuel and announced hikes on other items to take effect immediately.

The drivers unions and the transport sector Tuesday voiced their full understanding of the recent government measures, aimed at reviving the Jordanian economy and denounced riots by a number of drivers in Maan Tuesday, at a time when the new transport tariff has already been approved.

Seminar urges protection of women

AMMAN (J.T.) — A seminar on crimes related to women in the Jordanian society which was held here last month has called on the judicial and other concerned authorities in the country to enact laws and regulations that provide protection for women from physical and psychological harm from within her own family.

The call was one of a set of recommendations issued by the seminar organised by the Arab Women Graduates Club and only published in the local press Tuesday.

The family's ban on allowing women to get medical treatment at the hand of male doctors or refusal to transfer a sick woman to a hospital for treatment are among the physical and psychological harm referred to in the recommendation.

The seminar called for equality between men and women in terms of the application of the laws especially those tackling crimes, adultery and others. The seminar also called on the judicial authorities to amend laws so as to give judges proper authority in settling cases related to rape and other moral issues; and to hold trials pertaining to morality in closed courts. The seminar urged the authorities to inflict heavy punishment on those arranging for the marriage of girls under 15 years of age since, it said, at that age the girl is still a minor and unable to decide for herself on matters of self interest.

The seminar urged the Ministry of Information, the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs and all societies involved in social issues to help combat crime related to women in any possible manner. It called on the information media and the press to launch a public awareness campaign aimed at combating crime and moral crime, and to organise seminars and other meetings to help in the national effort against crime and criminals.

The seminar also called on information media in Jordan to help spread awareness among women to orient them on their rights and duties; and means of protecting themselves from physical and psychological harm.

In addition, the seminar called on the concerned authorities to launch programmes and public awareness campaigns designed to stem juvenile delinquency in Jordan.

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Baghdad-Amman rail link considered

KUWAIT (J.T.) — Iraq has prepared an initial study to lay a railway line linking Baghdad with Amman and Aqaba, and it hopes to work out plans for similar projects to connect Iraq with Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Turkey, Iraqi Minister of Transport and Communications Mohammed Hamzeh announced here Tuesday.

The announcement was made in an interview with the Kuwaiti daily Al Siyassah which said that the Iraq-Jordan railway study had been prepared over the past years and there will be a meeting shortly between officials from both countries to agree on final details of the project.

Hamzeh announced also that a new direct land transport route will be opened between Cairo and Baghdad shortly and that vehicles will be passing through Jordanian territory and the port city of Aqaba to Nweibeh in Sinai and then Egypt.

Hamzeh said that a railway network which would later be linked to European railways is bound to save a great deal of time, money and effort for the Arab World.

Iraq depends a great deal on the port city of Aqaba for its imports, and there is a fleet of 900 trucks owned and operated by the Iraq-Jordan Land Transport Company which transports the goods to Iraq.

Cleaning Balqa, Jordan Valley

DEIR ALLA (Petra, J.T.) — The local authorities in the Balqa and the Jordan Valley regions will launch two one-month campaigns in the valley in the coming summer to rid the area of harmful insects, according to an announcement by Balqa Governor Mihjem Kireisha.

The announcement said that in July and September special teams appointed by the local authorities will spray insecticides throughout the two months to rid the area of common flies and mosquitoes.

The announcement, which followed a meeting by representatives of various local councils under the chairmanship of the governor, said also that farmers in the valley will be instructed to refrain from using the remains of poultry farms and other organic materials as fertilizers in their areas.

The meeting discussed the problem of plastic bags and plastic sheets used by the farmers, and decided that they cause a real danger to public safety and severe damage to livestock wealth.

According to the announcement, farmers will be asked to remove all remains of plastic products after being used to cover the crops in the winter season, and to build sanitary facilities for their workers. It said that the question of vacationers mostly from Amman who invade the warm Jordan Valley region in winter for outings and the huge amounts of refuse and garbage and rubbish they leave behind was also discussed.

The Balqa Governorate will spearhead a mass media campaign which will extend later to schools and educational institutions to spread awareness among the public about the need to keep the countryside clean and green, and to dispose of their waste in an organised and correct manner, according to the announcement.

It said that such questions as wastewater treatment plants and ways to dump and dispose of garbage in the areas of Deir Alla and North and South Shuneh were discussed at the meeting which was also attended by officials from the Ministry of Health and the environment department of the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs.

In February 1989, the Jordan Valley committee adopted a series of recommendations aimed at dealing with issues pertaining to the protection of the environment and establishing tourist areas in the Jordan Valley.

The committee meeting, in which Her Majesty Queen Noor participated, proposed solutions for ridding the areas of pests, the treatment of natural manure and plastic waste and the establishment of national parks for the benefit of picnickers.

The committee was formed following the Queen's visit to the Jordan Valley, the Dead Sea and the town of Qweineh where she inspected the area closely and gave directives on a number of measures to be taken to improve services for vacationers and to create public parks.

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Role of private sector

AMMAN (Petra) — The Institute of Public Administration (IPA) will organise a week-long seminar in Aqaba on May 13 to discuss the role of the private sector in Jordan's development.

A statement said that 30 secretaries general and heads of leading government departments along with directors of major industrial and financial organisations in Jordan will take part in the meeting which will be opened by Finance Minister Hanna Odeh.

The announcement said that no less than 10 working papers will be tackled by the participants dealing with questions ranging from loans and incentives for investments and the transfer of technology and export operations. IPA Director General Abdullah Ulayyan said that the seminar will discuss and analyse efforts being made in socio-economic development, investment opportunities in the Kingdom and the effects of the recent government measures on the national economy.

MAPS: The Land and Survey Department Tuesday donated a number of old maps of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Transjordan emirate and Palestine to the Royal Jordanian Geographic Centre's library. These documents include topographic maps in both Arabic and English languages, in addition to one showing the archaeological sites in Jordan (Petra).

Regent hopes for peace in Sudan Arab groupings can ensure joint solutions

The following are some excerpts from an interview with His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, published by the Sudanese paper Al Khartoum and Al Ashiq magazine.



HRH Crown Prince Hassan

Prince Hassan, Head of the National Committee for Solidarity with the Sudanese People, was asked about Jordan's aid mission sent recently to Sudan.

The Crown Prince expressed satisfaction with the performance of the aid mission to Sudan and said such missions presented a model for establishing better conditions for regional cooperation.

"The situation looks hopeful when we see we are moving from the idea of relief to that of development and to transforming the families that receive aid into productive families through the execution of irrigation and electrification projects in the Sudan," the Crown Prince said.

He expressed hope that the concept of the Hashemite mission would be transformed into a Jordanian-Arab peace mission in the future. When such a concept receives funding and support, it can be applied in any part of Sudan.

Asked about his efforts of achieving peace in Sudan, the Crown Prince said the latest Sudanese peace agreement signed lately was ultimately what we were hoping for — that the peace comes in an inter-Sudanese context.

The Crown Prince said the Arab Thought Forum (ATF) had often attempted to think of solutions to the Sudanese problem but that its members were faced with difficulties because of the size of Sudan's economic problem. To that is added the problem of the number of faiths and the intense migration resulting from conflicts and natural disasters.

Asked about the obstacles that stood in the face of Arab economic integration, the Crown Prince pointed to the absence of Arab will which he said should have stood by Iraq to stop the bloodshed instead of continuing the war which undoubtedly weakened the Arab economic situation in general.

In short, he said, if these regional economic groupings are really based on the concept of long-run integration, "then I think there is a great hope in saying that Arab cooperation has started to take into consideration the steady factors of interaction in this world which presents political considerations and planning according to its mood."

Asked whether this reflected optimism on his part, the Crown Prince said "I am at least optimistic about the possibility of the issue because when we talk about the three groupings, we can determine that great efforts were exerted to ensure the success of that work and its content."

Asked whether he thought the Arab Cooperation Council (ACC), which groups Jordan, Egypt, Iraq and North Yemen, could help solve Jordan's economic difficulty, the Crown Prince said "ACC members are facing economic difficulties and I think the joint solution to these problems is to enhance the common denominator among the member states by establishing a clear con-

cept such as setting up an economic bridge between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea to the Arabian Gulf, an economic bridge of land, air and water transport."

The Crown Prince also said that Jordan's economic adjustments measures that were taken in the past few months such as the floating of the dinar's interest rate, were aimed at reconditioning the economy. "This (floating) was done for the first time in Jordan and its practical positive aspect is that it will serve to focus investors' attention on exports and it would promote tourism into the country."

The Prince pointed out that the next five year development plan called on the rest of the Arabs to contribute to the building of the Jordanian economy so that it can reach its self-sufficiency stage. "It is difficult to talk about self development in isolation especially when we talk about political economy," he said.

Asked about His Majesty King Hussein's decision to sever legal and administrative ties with the West Bank, the Crown Prince said it was clear, in view of Israel's arrogance and negativism towards efforts of convening an international peace conference, that the last months of the Reagan administration saw a distancing from the priority of looking into the Middle East issue.

The Crown Prince added: "The (disengagement) step taken was a forcing step for every Arab nationalist in the unity context, the context of the Great Arab Revolt. And since it was a political move, it was necessary for the promotion of the Palestinian role on the international scene as well as the role of the PLO," the Crown Prince said.

"This was clear in the speech given by PLO Chairman (Yasser Arafat) during the Palestine National Council meeting and following that in Geneva; a development which was not possible, in my belief, were it not for Jordan's clear resolve to sever legal and administrative ties with the occupied West Bank so that this political reality be granted its real political weight in the Arab-Israeli conflict," he said.

"There is a Palestinian will in the occupied territories which refuses occupation and calls for the establishment of a political identity, a Palestinian state. This is the clear trend of the Palestinian intifada and our role is to highlight this trend."

Asked whether he was optimistic about the efforts of the new U.S. administration and whether those could lead to an interna-

tional conference in view of the moves by Arab leaders, most notably by King Hussein, the Crown Prince said that despite those latter moves, there is a clear programme of priorities which the great powers would handle in the coming years.

"We support calls similar to those of Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze's for a meeting of foreign ministers of the five permanent members of the Security Council," the Crown Prince said.

"My answer, in short, is that the international strategic ramifications radically affect the agenda of the superpowers but the question is to what extent will it go and how far would they take it?"

Asked what new element does King Hussein take with him on his current trip to the U.S., the Crown Prince replied: "Reasserting the Arab position... for after long years of struggle, it is clear that the door is open on the Arab and international arenas for joint action for the sake of the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the occupied Arab territories."

Jordan, he said, is a confrontation state and has the longest border with Israel. "The important thing is for the great powers, and the U.S. in particular, to feel that there is a regional tendency for cooperation (manifested) through the visits of Arab heads of states to Washington."

The Crown Prince described Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's new plan as "old" and said that it constituted a return to the Camp David accords since it suggested holding elections under occupation.

Regarding the Arab Thought Forum (ATF), the Crown Prince said it had built bridges of trust between its members and described the ATF as the only forum which was able to hold a seminar on Islamic reawakening and the concerns of the Arab citizens, all with the participation of various Arab schools of thought from the left of the political spectrum to its right, in a clear and frank dialogue.

Students' religious education

IRBID (Petra) — Yarmouk University Tuesday held a seminar to discuss religious orientation among the university students organised by the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs.

Minister of Awqaf Abdul Aziz Al Khayyat and ministry's Secretary General Ahmad Hilayel were among those addressing the seminar which was attended by students and university professor Mohammad Hamdan as well as deans and heads of departments. Khayyat spoke in length about the need to adhere to Islamic principles, but warned against fanaticism.

The minister answered questions put to him by students on the Ministry of Awqaf's programmes and activities in mosques and in promoting Islamic heritage.

Women join the police force

AMMAN (J.T.) — The police women department which was established in Jordan in 1972 has been receiving increasing number of applications by female youths to join the force, according to the force's commander Major Husniel Shahin.

Shahin said in a statement published in Sawt Al Shaabi daily Tuesday that a total of 450 police women had graduated from her department since 1972, and have been assigned different posts around the country.

A total of 120 of the graduates hold university degrees while the rest are graduates of schools and community colleges in Jordan, Shahin noted.

She said that police women are currently employed at border posts, airports, government departments, prisons, tourist facilities and resthouses, the Drivers and Vehicle Licensing Department and juvenile delinquency centres.

Shahin noted that police women can be found at all the archaeological sites and tourist centres and on the streets directing traffic along side policemen.

According to Major Shahin, girls aged between 17 and 27 years with not less than 155 centimetres height can be accepted if they have passed the tawjihi examination. She said that the girls undergo a rigorous 22-week training course which entails training in the use of light arms and martial arts like taekwon-do and karate skills.

According to Major Shahin a number of Syrian women are now receiving training along side Jordanians in the Police Women Department, and there are arrangements for providing similar training for girls from Kuwait

and the United Arab Emirates. Apart from police work, the officers take secretarial courses, and language courses and receive financial incentives and awards for distinguished achievements.

Some police women, she said, take advanced courses in criminal investigation and help conduct investigation with women criminals.



Women police officers during a basic skill exercise. (Photo: Hawajreh — Sawt Al Shaabi)

Jordan Times

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Natural development

THE abolition of all West Bank seats in the Lower House of Parliament, as called for in the amendment to the election law of 1986, is a natural and logical development to Jordan's decision last year to sever legal and administrative relations with that territory in order to give the Palestinians full opportunity to redress Israel's denial of their national rights. The amendment also goes full way to remove all ambiguities or lingering doubts about who is and who is not a Jordanian citizen. In this vein, the salient principles of international law as well as domestic law on citizenship rights and obligations were fully observed and respected. It will be noted that all those who carry Jordanian citizenships and accordingly obtain Jordanian passports are deemed Jordanian citizens irrespective of their national origins. There are always legal procedures available to all those who wish to change their citizenship but until they do so the law in this country would view and regard them as Jordanian citizens who are accorded full enjoyment of all the rights and privileges pertaining to such citizenship. Likewise, citizenship in Jordan as elsewhere requires the fulfillment of all the duties towards the state that accrue from such citizenship. Part and parcel of such rights and duties is of course the participation in the next elections in the country to elect a new Lower House of Parliament.

One of the many positive aspects of the amendment to the 1986 Election Law is the surgical removal of the anachronism that ensued when a special criterion was bestowed upon the refugee camps within the country. The special circumstances that existed in the era prior to Jordan's momentous verdict to sever legal and administrative relations with the West Bank obviously no longer exist now. Henceforth, residents of the refugee camps can cast their ballots in the next and all future national elections as part of the greater constituencies making up electoral districts rather than forming a separate constituency of refugee camps. Again the deletion of the special treatment that was accorded to refugee camps is in full harmony with relevant international and domestic laws and any other treatment would be repugnant to international norms.

What remains is the fixation of the date of the next national elections in the country. As voter registration will begin immediately after the Eid Al Fitr holidays and projected to be finalised by next autumn, it would be natural to anticipate the next elections shortly thereafter. Jordanians of all walks of life are yearning to cast their ballots in accordance with their conscious and political views and aspirations. And now that all complexes have been removed legally and lawfully, time is ripe to give Jordanian that natural opportunity.

JORDAN PRESS EDITORIALS

Lebanon was among the major topics discussed by King Hussein and French President Francois Mitterrand during the monarch's stop in Paris on his way to the United States, said Al Ra'i Arabie daily Tuesday. It said that the King has expressed concern over the situation in Lebanon and said that current efforts are underway to convene an Arab summit in which the Lebanese question would be discussed. The paper noted that Jordan has always called for a collective Arab effort through summits to end the conflict in Lebanon and to find a settlement for the Lebanese problems. His discussions with the French president which also covered the Middle East and bilateral relations, display the monarch's keenness on resolving issues in the Arab World with the help of friendly nations the paper noted. It said that apart from the Arab-Israeli conflict, the King is directing his attention to Lebanon where the Lebanese are living through an ordeal and sufferings. There is no doubt that through collective effort by Arab leaders on the one hand, and cooperation with friendly nations on the other, a just and durable settlement for the Lebanese question and the Arab Israeli conflict can be found, the paper concluded.

A columnist in Al Ra'i daily laments the situation in Lebanon where he says that the killing of women and children and the destruction of an Arab country can only benefit the Israelis. Tareq Masarweh says that there is no difference between Israeli invaders who launched their invasion of Lebanon and attacked Beirut in 1982, and the bombers who shell residential areas indiscriminately in 1989. The writer says that Israel had always had its eyes on Lebanon, but in the 1982 invasion it failed to destroy that country which remained an Arab bastion, but adds that the militias seem to have inherited the task from the Israelis and are now involved in a total destruction of their own country. He says that the destruction of hospitals and the power station can only cause harm to the innocent civilians but is short of quenching the lust for blood on the part of the warmongers. The writer wonders about the attitude of the Arab World which has today looked on without lifting a finger to end the tragedy in Lebanon.

Al Dostour daily tackled the King's current visits abroad and said that his talks with Western leaders are of paramount importance in view of the developments in the Middle East in general and the Palestine problem in particular. The paper said the King has focused the world's attention on the Palestinians and their plight under Israeli occupation rule. His talks in Washington, as they had been in Paris one concentrated on means of establishing peace and there is no doubt that the monarch is representing the whole Arab Nation and speaking the voice of the Arab masses and Arab governments, the paper noted. It said that the king has had meetings and consultations with Arab leaders before embarking on his current tour and he is supported by Arab masses in his drive to establish peace. There is no doubt, said the paper, that winning the support to the European Community and that of the United States will boost the peace process and end Israel's oppression and its occupation of the Arab lands.

By Daoud Kuttab

HOW should Palestinians respond to the proposal for elections in the West Bank and Gaza made by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir during his recent visit to Washington? I believe they should respond in the same spirit of creative struggle that has characterised the Palestinian intifada.

Shamir clearly hopes the PLO will continue its initial position of rejecting of his proposal. This would lead to one of three things: no elections, taking Shamir off the hook; a divisive battle over the election issue between Palestinians in the territories and the PLO outside; or election of an alternative leadership to the PLO. Shamir's plan also has the broader goals of reinforcing the Camp David approach to solving the conflict, denying a Palestinian state and putting a stop to the intifada.

All these aims can be defeated by applying the same strategies

and characteristics that have made the intifada successful. The Shamir plan can become a trap for Shamir and the Israeli government if Palestinians use courage, unity, creativity, decisiveness and realistic rational thinking.

One of the reasons for the success of the uprising has been that it shifted the focus of the Palestinian-Israeli struggle from the question of the PLO and terrorism to the question of Israel's occupation of Palestinian land. The uprising accentuated the positive aspects of the Palestinian cause, rather than the negative. It allowed the Palestinians to take the initiative rather than react to the actions of others.

With his election proposal, Shamir hopes to reverse this trend. If the PLO rejects elections, as Shamir hopes, it will be tainted as using "terror" rather than politics. The Israeli government will also claim the PLO is afraid of elections because it might not win.

Palestinians led by the PLO should be clear about the implica-

tions of a rejection strategy: If Palestinians boycott elections, the United States will do one of two things. It will tell Israel that its approach hasn't worked and that it's time to talk directly to the PLO. Or it will conclude that the Palestinians have blown it again and wash its hands of the problem.

The U.S. administration will most likely take the second approach and lower its involvement in the region. This means that if Palestinians want U.S. involvement, they have no choice but to try and play the election game. The Palestinian position could be different if there were other choices — like a real military option or a unified Arab position. But there aren't.

Once it becomes clear that Palestinians need to play the game, there are many things that can be done to put the ball back in the Israeli court. To begin with, the PLO should refrain from making its position known through the press. Instead, what the PLO needs to do is let the

Americans officially present the plan to them. When it is presented, the PLO can ask for clarifications and details and guarantees and timetables. The Americans will have to get many of the details from the Israelis and provide the guarantees themselves, but the process will amount to Israel negotiating with the PLO — albeit indirectly.

The details on which the PLO should push for clarification include: Who will vote? What purpose will the elections have? Will they be part of a multi-stage plan for resolving the Palestinian issue? How long will each stage in which the final solution is discussed? The PLO can demand irrevocable guarantees that those nominated and elected will be free to travel, speak and express themselves, without facing imprisonment, bodily harm or deportation. Supervision by a neutral party will also be a must.

The PLO can also use a number of other tactics to turn Shamir's idea against him. In order to emphasise the fact that Palesti-

nian leaders in the occupied territories are PLO supporters, the leadership in Tunis can publicly announce the names of the candidates. The PLO can also use the elections to select members of the Palestine National Council from the occupied territories. American guarantees for the safety of election candidates will thus be extended, in effect, to PNC representatives. And if Israel still wants to negotiate with elected representatives, it will be negotiating with full-fledged members of the PNC — the highest legislative body of the PLO.

Palestinians can also use the elections to emphasise their desire for an independent Palestinian state. Again, if we can assume some kind of U.S. immunity for those elected, the PLO can appoint some of the candidates as members of the provisional government of the state of Palestine. Ever since the state of Palestine was declared last Nov. 15, Palestinians have been afraid — and rightly so — that those nominated for positions in

the state will be immediately arrested and possibly deported. But American guarantees can solve this problem.

Furthermore, since Israel will be committed to negotiate with the elected Palestinians, it will find itself negotiating with individuals who are not only elected by Palestinians in the occupied territories, but who are members of the provisional government of the state of Palestine. By agreeing to talk and negotiate with them, Israel will be recognising de facto state of Palestine.

Of course, there is no guarantee that the commitment made by Shamir to have "free and democratic" elections will be sustained if the Palestinians play their cards well. Shamir could be trapped in his own plan and forced to repudiate it. By retaking the initiative, Palestinians will force the Israeli leadership to accept the reality of the PLO's representation of the Palestinian people or face increasing international pressure until there is a realistic and comprehensive solution — Washington Post.

Philippines: Human rights situation remains grim under President Aquino

By Eileen Guerrero
The Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines — Deep scars on the back of Hilario Bustamante serve as a grim reminder of the time a year ago when armed men abducted him, tortured him for three days and left him for dead.

His story is one example of what Roman Catholic priests, lawyers and civil rights workers say is a pattern of widespread human rights abuses in the Philippines despite President Corazon Aquino's oft-stated commitment to social justice.

Bustamante and a companion were putting up posters against U.S. military bases when they were grabbed on a Manila street in March 1988. The youth says they were taken to a military garrison, tortured, driven to a remote field and dumped unconscious.

His companion was found dead, but Bustamante survived. A year later, police say there are no leads. Bustamante has given up pursuing the case, fearing for his life.

Some groups claim human rights abuses are more widespread now than under former President Ferdinand Marcos, who was ousted in the 1986 uprising that propelled Aquino to power.

The church-affiliated task force detainees say 8,367 people were detained in 1987 on suspicion of links to rebel groups. That exceeds the 5,967 people arrested in 1985, the last full year of Marcos' rule. The task force says one out of four arrested are tortured.

Also in 1987, the task force documented 98 massacres, compared with 54 in 1985. Victims include 17 people slain in Lupao in February 1987 and at least 13 protesters killed during a march for land reform in Manila in January 1987.

No one has been convicted in either case, although the military acknowledges soldiers were responsible.

Communist threat

But last December, Amnesty International reported "a pattern of torture" in the campaign against Communist insurgents.

The government's commission on human rights says only 12 people have been convicted of human rights abuses since Aquino took power.

"I am not happy with the human rights situation," said Sen. Rene Saguisag, a former human rights lawyer and former spokesman for Aquino. "We can't even be assured that we won't be the victim of human rights violations tomorrow."

Amnesty's report blamed the abuses on military and paramilitary units, including hundreds of anti-Communist vigilante groups organised since 1987 to help fight the rebels.

Aquino branded the report unfair. But priests and others active in the human rights movement say little is done to track down and punish offenders. Victims keep silent for fear of reprisal.

"Human rights is not a matter of statistics but is a matter of terror," said Rev. Vincent Busch, a U.S. member of the Society of St. Columban, a religious order and critic of the government's human rights performance.

Priests and lawyers complain that the military frequently brands whole villages as Communist if New People's Army rebels operate in the area. Civilians are singled out for arrest and torture on the flimsiest of evidence.

"They say Samar is no. 1 in insurgency so they think everybody is Communist," said Leticia Buenaesada, a lawyer for the commission on human rights in Samar island.

Buenaesada said she received threats from the military and her office was ransacked by soldiers after she began investigating the disappearances of several civilians. Six human rights lawyers have been slain nationwide since October 1987.

Priests complain that local military commanders, in an attempt to impress their superiors in Manila, force whole villages to participate in mock "surrenders." Rev. Michael Sinnott, an Irishman based in Mindanao, said the abuses were actually driving civilians into the insurgent ranks.

"The best recruiting agency for the NPA is the military," he said. "For every abuse they commit, they recruit five people more (for the guerrillas)."

Critics fear the situation will worsen as the military deploys a new civilian militia, the Citizens Armed Forces Geographical Unit. The military says the 50,000 militiamen will be sent to remote villages to augment security but that they will be strictly controlled.

Death squads

Critics claim the militias and vigilantes are virtual "death squads."

Augusto Sanchez, a human rights lawyer and former labour minister under Aquino, said police and soldiers target anyone with liberal or leftist views.

"The 'red scare' has generated feelings among the right-wing forces, the military and the police that anybody tainted or Communist-branded is due for liquidation," Sanchez said.

Rev. Rafael Donato, chairman of the Association of Major Religious Superiors, said he personally referred several cases to Aquino, Defence Secretary Fidel Ramos and military chief of staff Gen. Renato de Villa but without satisfaction.

"All of them said 'we will investigate, we will investigate, we will investigate.' But nothing happens," Donato said. "We have cases, but there is no satisfaction in the way these cases are investigated. Justice is not felt. The legitimate grievances are not given their due course."

Critics blame the problem on the vast influence of the military on the Aquino administration. That influence has increased with the stepped up counter-insurgency campaign and after Ramos and others crushed six coup attempts by military dissidents.

Critics claim Aquino is reluctant to crack down on military abuses because she needs loyal officers to remain in power and to fulfill her pledge to crush the Communists.

Two priests, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said Aquino had admitted to them during a private meeting that she was unable to control the military.

Hostage president

"While there were attempts to fulfill promises, I believe she was shocked into submission by the series of coups d'etat," said Arnel de Guzman, chairman of the Ecumenical Movement for Justice and Peace. "She is a hostage of the military or some other forces."

Donato added that in the countryside, many Filipinos believe the military "calls the shots." "Of course, this is denied, naturally, but the perception is there," Donato said. "It's very strong. Until the military will become completely non-politicized, the perception will continue to be this. The problem is that the military is politicized."

Soon after taking power, Aquino established the commission on human rights as a watchdog agency. But the commission can only refer cases to military courts, which have sole power to prosecute soldiers for any offence, including those against civilians.

Commission chairman Hesi-quo Mallillin, a former human rights lawyer, acknowledges that

abuses continue "but the CHR is doing its best to improve the situation. I am asking them (critics) to give the government a chance in solving this problem."

Some human rights activists, many of whom played major roles in the uprising against Marcos, express disappointment that Aquino has been unable to curb human rights abuses.

"Her image abroad is fantastic," said Rev. Brendan O'Connell, an Irishman based on Negros island. "They see this lovely person and say, 'this is not true because human rights is the policy of this government. So these reports could not be true.' It in effect tells people things are okay."

"People from the little barrios or slum areas, they say 'things are going to be alright,' which stops them from doing something. They say this beautiful woman is like the baby Jesus, who will save us. That's why I think she's part of the problem."

Ironically, Aquino was herself a victim of human rights abuse when her husband, Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr., was imprisoned, forced into exile and then murdered when he returned in 1983 to challenge Marcos.

"While she was victimised by the military, she was carrying her cross alone," de Guzman said. "She was not with the people, not with any social group. Maybe she has no sense of collectivity."

Sanchez said the Aquino government has failed to achieve many of its early goals, including human rights, because of a lack of a coherent "vision."

"Up to now, there's no such thing. The direction of government is in many different directions," he said. "There's no central plan because there's no vision."

De Guzman predicted abuse will escalate until the government and the rebels reach a political solution to the 20-year insurgency.

"Unless that happens, human rights violations will continue and the casualty will not be the government nor the rebels but the unarmed civilian population," he added.

Sri Lanka peace talks praised

By Feisal Samath
Reuters

COLOMBO — Sri Lankan politicians and political analysts welcomed the idea of peace talks between the government and Tamil rebels but said an end to a conflict that killed more than 12,000 people was still far off.

"The talks are welcome, but we are a long way from ending the conflict between majority Sinhalese and minority Tamils," said Hector Abhayawardene, a veteran political commentator.

President Ranasinghe Premadasa Sunday accepted an offer from the main Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam guerrilla group to hold peace talks.

The rebel group, fighting for an independent homeland in the north and east for the island's two million Tamils, sent a letter to Premadasa saying "we are prepared to accept your open invitation to talk with us."

The acceptance of peace talks follows lengthy efforts by the government to bring Tamil and Sinhalese rebels to the negotiating table.

The leftwing Sinhalese People's Liberation Front, which is trying to topple the government from the south, rejected the offer of a unilateral ceasefire by Sri Lankan troops and a similar invitation by Premadasa for talks.

The week-long ceasefire started Wednesday but has been shattered by the killing of at least 75 people since Thursday.

Forty-two of the victims were killed by the Buddhist and Hindu new year when they were killed in a car bomb. Two days later 21 Sri Lankan soldiers died in a rebel ambush. Both attacks were in eastern Trincomalee district.

More than 12,000 people have been killed in the past six years in the two rebellions. The front stepped up its campaign after about 50,000 Indian troops came to Sri Lanka in July 1987 to implement a pact aimed at ending the Tamil rebellion.

Abhayawardene said the Tigers' about-turn after rejecting previous invitations to talks probably stemmed from the fact that "they are threatened by exter-

mination by Indian troops and of being ousted by a former rebel group turned provincial administrator.

"In these circumstances they seem to find in the Sri Lankan government, a possible ally," he said.

Premadasa has asked the Tigers to nominate a person to discuss arrangements to start talks.

The proposed talks would be the second between the Tigers and the government — the first being in August 1985 in Bhutan.

Those discussions with a four member rebel alliance, including the Tigers, failed after the Tamils accused the Sri Lankan government of violating a ceasefire. The talks were arranged by India.

A spokesman for the Eelam Revolutionary Students Organisation, a former rebel group which now has 13 members in parliament, praised the government and the Tigers.

"At last we see a dawn of peace. We have often stressed the need for talks with the Tigers... our efforts have paid off," he said.

The dialogue was also welcomed by Rev. Maduloluwe Sobitha, a Buddhist monk and vociferous opponent of Tigers.

"Peace is most important. Talking and discussing one's problems is good. Weapons cannot solve problems," said Sobitha, who led many protests in 1987 against alleged Tiger massacres of Sinhalese.

Lakshman Jayakody, member of parliament for the main opposition Freedom Party, was more cautious. "It is good... it is good. But the government should not fall into a trap," he said without elaborating.

Jayakody said the Tigers should also talk to opposition parties and the front.

In an apparent gesture of goodwill, the president's office said Saturday that a further batch of 7,000 Indian soldiers would leave by next week.

About 5,000 troops left earlier this year in response to a request by Premadasa, who promised at presidential elections last December that all Indian troops would be withdrawn as soon as possible.

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'Seed wars' centre on patents and profits

By Paul Raeburn and Lee Mitgang
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A U.N. commission meeting next month will be the latest arena in a growing rift between developed and third world countries over whether plant breeders have the right to patent commercially produced seed lines.

The United States insists they do. Third world nations call that genetic imperialism they believe commercial seed lines should be exchanged as freely as the raw germplasm that originates in their countries and they are angry they haven't shared in profits generated from plants that once grew wild in their own soil.

"For years now, the third world has been donating this material on the principle that these botanical treasures form part of the 'common heritage' of all humanity," said Clarence Dias, president of the New York-based international center for law in development.

"Meanwhile, (industrialised nations) have been patenting the offshoots of this common heritage and are now marketing its new varieties, at enormous profit, back to the third world."

Germplasm is the plant genetic material needed to breed bearier crops able to resist drought, pests, disease and the global warming trend called the greenhouse effect.

The "seed wars" debate has simmered within the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation since 1979. The latest round will be fought at a meeting of the FAO's commission on plant genetic resources scheduled for

April 17-21 in Rome.

The United States will once again be asked to endorse the international undertaking on plant genetic resources enacted by the FAO commission 5 1/2 years ago. The undertaking extends the principle of free exchange to commercial seed lines.

Mexico led the fight for the undertaking and the creation of the FAO commission to oversee it. Many of the ideas underlying the FAO's actions came from the writings of Pat Roy Mooney, a Canadian economist who favours compensating developing countries for the use of their germplasm.

Currently, 116 countries have endorsed the undertaking or joined the commission, including France, West Germany, the Netherlands, Britain and other developed countries, said the commission's secretary, Jose Esquinas-Alcázar.

But the United States has not. It attends commission meetings only as a silent observer.

Patents

Officially, the United States agrees that germplasm is mankind's common heritage. But the 1970 Plant Variety Protection Act and a 1980 supreme court decision established the right of breeders to patent their products.

"Our allowing the patenting of plants doesn't help our negotiators who are arguing that plants are the common heritage of mankind," said a knowledgeable congressional aide who spoke on condition of anonymity. "We're in Rome arguing 'common heritage' and in courtrooms in the U.S. arguing individual ownership."

"Third world countries don't

like it," said Rodolfo Quintero, a prominent Mexican biologist affiliated with the United Nations. "The potential for barring the developing countries is real."

Plant patenting, he said, has already denied Mexico profits it feels it is due. A food developed from a Mexican form of algae was patented as shrimp feed in Japan, and Mexican shrimp farmers are now paying royalties to Japan, Quintero said.

U.S. refusal to participate in the commission could prompt a backlash in which other countries would deny germplasm to the United States, some U.S. officials fear.

India, for example, the sole source of important varieties of cotton and other crops, now bars the collection of seeds by Americans.

"I'm inclined to think that in that case, it's an outgrowth of this whole FAO debate," said Charles Murphy, secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Plant Genetic Resource Board.

Some U.S. agriculture officials favour softening American opposition to the commission because they fear it could further restrict U.S. access to foreign germplasm.

All of America's major crops first sprouted in foreign soil, and that's where plant breeders must go to look for varieties with valuable genetic traits. The only native U.S. crops are the pecan, a few species of berries and an obscure tuber called the Jerusalem artichoke.

The need for bearier wheat in Kansas sends U.S. botanists to Turkey. For disease-resistant corn, they search Mexican mountainsides. To breed the tubers needed for flawless potato chips,

they go to Peru.

Germplasm

American farmers are reaping four times the corn and potatoes per acre they could 50 years ago. Wheat and rice yields have doubled. At least half of these gains come from higher-yielding crop varieties bred with germplasm from around the world.

"The United States has depended on the genetic resources of the rest of the world to develop its agricultural base," the general accounting office, "Congress" investigative arm, said in a review of America's germplasm policies.

Hoping to improve the American position in Rome, the U.S. national plant genetic resource board called last year for reconsideration of U.S. opposition to the undertaking.

Germplasm experts from around the world met in Colorado last summer to try to find a way to resolve the FAO dispute. They couldn't agree on how to reconcile patenting and the FAO undertaking. But they did agree to support an existing international fund to channel money from industrialised nations to training and conservation programmes in developing countries.

The fund was established by the FAO in 1987, and it has received pledges of about \$500,000 so far, Esquinas said.

Still, the odds remain against the United States joining the commission in April, said Wayne Denney, a USDA official who will help represent the United States at the meeting.

"It will suggest that something we opposed vigorously in many forums wasn't so bad after all," Agriculture department offi-

cials also fear that including germplasm in trade embargoes against six countries it considers adversaries — North Korea, Cuba, Cambodia, Vietnam, Nicaragua and Libya — could prompt retaliation by developing nations, leaving U.S. agriculture the prime victim.

Those officials have struggled for two years to get germplasm exempted from the embargoes. The State Department has blocked those efforts, officials of both departments said.

"I don't think it bodes well for us as a country to say, 'we support a free policy of exchange', and then have others be able to say, 'well, you don't send it,'" said Henry L. Shands, head of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Germplasm Programme and a leader of efforts to end the embargoes.

Even with the embargoes, American Gene Banks are unrivaled in making their resources available to researchers around the world, said George White, head of the USDA office that approves plant imports and exports. Each year, 1,500 to 2,000 shipments are sent to as many as 120 countries, White said.

USDA officials note the United States is not alone in restricting germplasm exchange for political reasons. Ethiopia, for example, forbids exports of coffee germplasm. Turkey embargoes export of tobacco germplasm. Egypt bans export of cotton germplasm.

Furthermore, germplasm embargoes are so easily circumvented that they amount to little more than a symbolic slap at the targeted nations — scientists need only ship seeds into an envelope and mail them.

Yemen builds a place for booklovers

By Peter Mathsson

SOUTH YEMEN — Wednesday morning commerce at the main square in historic Seiyun is brisk. Spices, vegetables and clothing are traded and sold while motorcycles whizz by, barely missing customers.

The square, flanked by the imposing castle which was once the residence of the powerful rulers of Hadramout, has always been the city's centre. At one end, workers are busy constructing a public library, the city's first. Bookworms and students have not had an easy time in Democratic Yemen. While the literacy rate has soared, the supply of reading material has not kept up with the demand.

Seiyun lies in the heart of the Hadramout governorate, the breadbasket of Democratic Yemen. In a country where less than one percent of the land is arable, the governorate plays an important role in feeding the nation. The rainfall — even in this favoured part of the country — may seem minimal, but the water that rushes down the hillsides collects in the "wadis" and is sufficient to produce a sizeable crop.

The public library in Seiyun is one of hundreds of individual schemes within a WFP food-for-work project to support community development. The project encompasses a wide range of activities, including road building, construction of schools and public buildings, improvement of sew-

age systems and land reclamation for agriculture.

Islam Naser, looks forward to the opening of the new library. As well as a leading library, the building will have a bookstore. Naser is the town's bookseller and as soon as construction is completed he will move in with his volumes.

"Everyone in town has been looking forward to this project for a long time," he says. "There are more than 800 book titles in my store which I cannot display because of lack of space."

Book sales are good but he concedes that sales will drop if people get a chance to borrow more readily. Not that he really minds; more important is that people discover books and start reading. Naser's bestsellers are children's books, history books and dictionaries; perhaps an indication of the high degree of literacy among youngsters, the new nation's interest in its past and a thirst for learning other languages. Unfortunately, the English-Arabic dictionaries are sold out in Naser's bookstore but there is an ample supply of Russian-Arabic lexicons for those trying to tackle Chekov in its original language.

The existing library is housed in the Kathiri Sultan's old palace (last tenant, Sultan Hussein Ben Saleh), now renamed Palace of the Revolution. An obvious location, one would think, since this former centre of power now serves as a multicultural forum, featuring an archaeological

museum and various exhibitions depicting the liberation struggle, folklore and handicrafts. But on this particular Wednesday morning, the books are inaccessible to the public because the library is padlocked and the librarian nowhere to be found. "Just as well," sighs a local palace employee, "they don't have much anyway."

Construction of the new library is progressing rapidly. Work was started in October 1987 and city authorities expect to open it to the public in 1988. Some 35 labourers are directly engaged in building, while at another site workers mix sand, clay and straw to mould traditional bricks, the construction workers take home 45 Yemeni dinars (\$135) a month and in addition are allotted five WFP food rations valued at 15 dinars.

"It will really be great when this place is finished," explained Ahmed Obeid, Director of the Planning Unit in the District Commissioner's Office. "In the cramped facilities we have now there isn't any place to sit down and read. People come to this square from all the surrounding areas to shop and do other errands. While waiting for the bus they can slip into the library and pass the time doing something worthwhile. Not to speak of all the drivers just hanging around; now they will have something to do. Now they have a place where they can read." (World Food Programme Journal).

Malawi bears the burden of Mozambique's war refugees

By Melinda Ham

BLANTYRE, Malawi — In less than three years, over 600,000 Mozambicans have fled into neighbouring Malawi to escape civil war in their own country. They have placed a heavy burden on one of the poorest and most densely populated countries in Africa. Malawi now has one of the biggest refugee problems in the world.

Yet little is heard about it because Malawi's relief operation is a success story.

An International Red Cross official says: "Headquarters feel this is the best relief operation in Africa. This is due to the positive attitude of all Malawians from the government to villagers."

Malawians say their country's border with Mozambique, created during colonial days, is artificial. "We speak the same language," says a Malawian truck driver. "They are our brothers and sisters."

In one southern district the ratio of refugees to local population is now 150 per cent. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) expects the total number to rise to 840,000 by the end of this year — equivalent to 10 per cent of the Malawian population.

Mozambicans are baying to be squeezed into districts where there are already serious land pressures and demands on services.

Thousands of trees have been felled as refugees search for firewood. Roads have been damaged with the extra weight of more than 600 truck loads of supplies a month.

"This large influx," said a recent aid agency report, "has exacerbated fiscal pressures, diverted scarce government managerial resources and strained Malawi's limited social infrastructure, particularly health and education."

The relief operation began in September 1986, with the Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS) aiding 30,000 "displaced persons."

The government soon set up a high-level committee to coordinate the assistance of different government ministries.

By mid-1987, Malawi could no longer cope alone as refugees

continued to pour across the border. So in September, UNHCR was asked to coordinate relief while the World Food Programme brought in food.

But despite this international assistance, the Malawian government and non-government organisations (NGOs) are still the most visible participants in the relief effort.

RCS is now responsible for distributing every month about 9,000 tonnes of food and other items, such as blankets, clothes and cooking pots. The Christian Services Committee of Malawi provides materials so refugees can build huts.

Malawi Save the Children Fund gives seeds, fertiliser, tools and technical advice to encourage vegetable growing. This provides refugees with essential vitamins. And if they sell their surplus at the market they can get cash. It also provides employment.

The education and health ministries have had to provide for Mozambicans as well as Malawians.

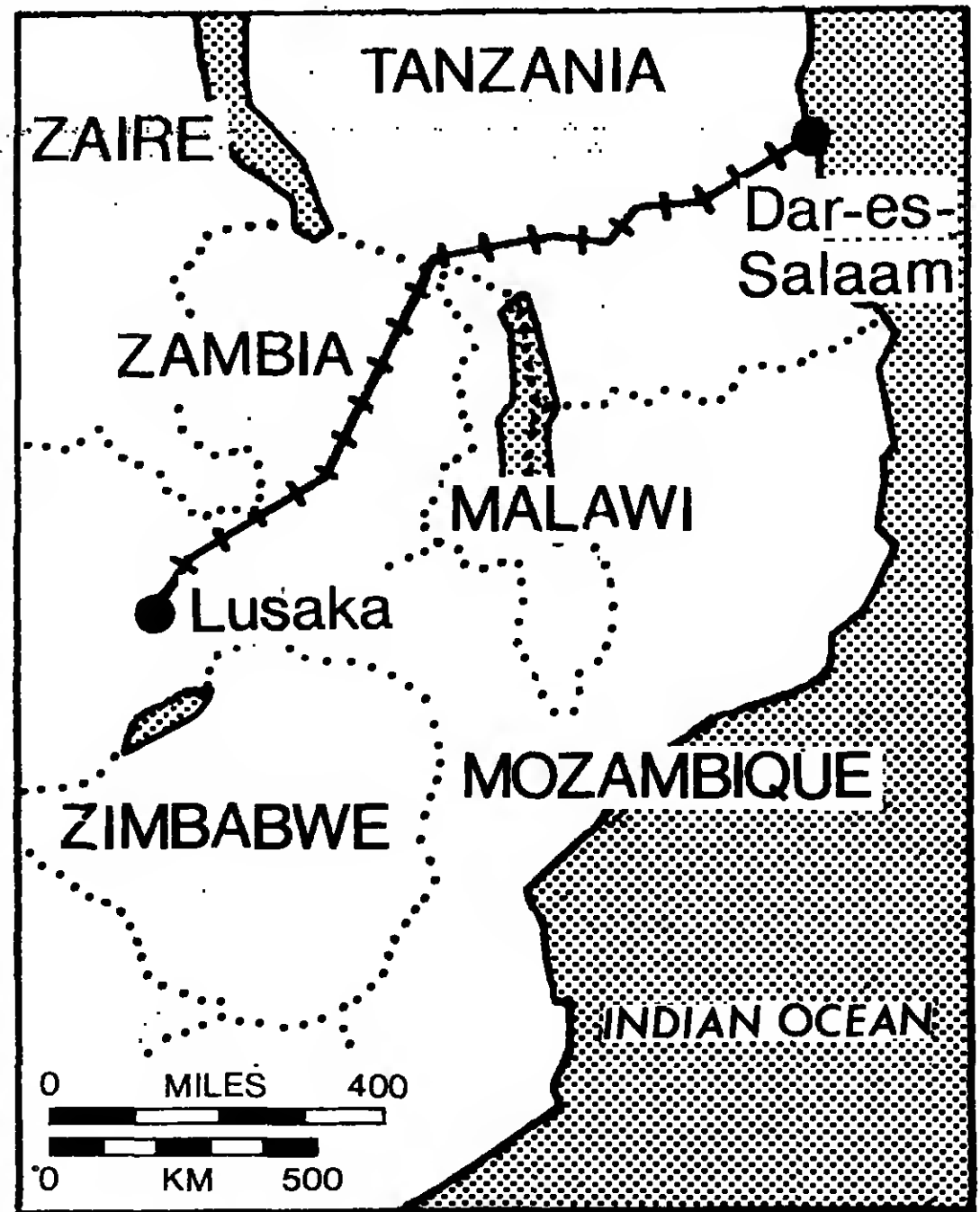
There are free schools in all the refugee camps. But they are desperately under-staffed. Mankhokwe — the biggest camp at the southernmost point of Malawi — has a school for 9,000 children but has only 41 Mozambican teachers.

Children are taught the Mozambican syllabus in Portuguese. They learn basic reading, writing and maths. But they have no books, paper or pencils.

The Ministry of Health has set up clinics in the camps that also care for Malawians. They are run by Malawian health assistants with doctors and nurses from Medicins Sans Frontiers (France) and International Rescue Committee (USA).

Refugees participate in health planning. Each section of the camp elects a health committee whose members ensure that any sick person is brought immediately to the clinic. The committee also decides what sanitation and drainage facilities are needed.

Clinics run nutrition, hygiene and ante-natal classes. Malnourished children — with swollen stomachs, orange thinning hair and open sores — are cared for in special intensive feeding centres.



They are fed five meals of high-energy milk with added oil and sugar as well as "likunipala" — a porridge made of maize, beans and groundnuts.

One indicator of the success of health care in the camps is the under-five mortality rate — an average 73 deaths per 1,000 a year. The national average for

Malawi is 270.

Refugees in some areas also seem materially better off than local people. They are given clothes, soap, a water container, three enamel cooking pots, and a blanket for each family member.

Some aid workers say their needs have been over-estimated because many refugees are selling

these items in local markets. But this illustrates the need of many for a cash income and their desire to regain some control over their own lives.

And although most refugees say they have been very well-treated in Malawi, their desire to return home is strong.

— Panos.

'African' bee finds friends

NEW YORK — Although it is presumably unaware of the fact, the African honey bee has acquired a decidedly unfavourable reputation due to the attentions of the world's media.

First, to call it "African" is a misnomer for the insect actually hails from Brazil. And with labels including "killer", it is not surprising that it has been portrayed as an unmitigated villain.

But the much maligned bee has at last found friends — and influential ones, too. A group of scientists from prestigious Cornell University has sprung to its defence. While conceding that it may be aggressive, they claim that it is the victim of exaggeration and misconceptions.

The "African" honey bee is a hybrid which buzzed into the headlines after 26 swarms of its fellows were accidentally released at Sao Paulo in 1956.

The Brazilians had imported African bees in the hope that the ensuing cross-breeds would prove docile and highly productive. But the experiment misfired, and before long there were lurid accounts of the "killer" bees' progress as they advanced north-

wards at the rate of about 500 kilometres a year.

These reports of people, pets and livestock suffering deaths from countless stings, read like the plots of science-fiction stories and films.

But apart from its irascibility, does the "African" bee deserve the bad image it has been given? No, say the Cornell scientists, who argue that the creature has a number of positive qualities.

For instance, it was not a poor pollinator as had been claimed. Because it matured faster, it needed more pollen than other strains to sustain itself. But farmers' fears of poor fruit crops were groundless.

A poor honey producer? On the contrary, the scientists retort. Although Brazil's production dropped for ten years after the hybrid bee appeared, this might be explained by the beekeepers' inability to cope with the newcomer's aggressive behaviour.

But now that they had learned new techniques, honey production had reached record levels.

Moreover, the scientists add, in one important respect the "African" bee is superior to other

strains. This was because it was resistant to a mite called varroa jacobsoni.

This tiny parasite attaches itself to adult bees, larvae and pupae, sucking blood and causing weakness and premature death.

It has now invaded colonies of U.S. bees, threatening the lucrative domestic honey industry. Thus the "African" bee's advent there may not prove to be the disaster feared, but something of a blessing in disguise.

— Lion features

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Report urges sweeping EC monetary changes

LUXEMBOURG (AP) — A report prepared for the 12-nation European Community (EC) urges European nations to make sweeping changes in their economic and monetary policies to forge a common currency and central bank.

Britain immediately expressed opposition to the unity push proposed in the report released Monday.

"The economic and monetary union which is spelled out there would in effect require political union — a United States of Europe," said Nigel Lawson, Britain's chancellor of the exchequer.

"That's simply not on the agenda now nor for the foreseeable future," he told reporters.

The report, released in Luxembourg, urged the nations of the Common Market trading bloc to begin the move toward economic and monetary union no later than July 1, 1990.

Such a drive, it said, "represents a quantum jump which could secure a significant increase in economic welfare in the Community."

The report by a 17-member committee, including European central bankers, will be discussed in June at a summit of the leaders of the nations making up the Common Market. Jacques Delors, president of the European Commission, the Community's executive body, was chairman of the panel.

The recommendations in the report would require major changes in the way in which the 12 nations conduct economic and monetary policy.

Lawson complained the proposals would force countries to give up some sovereignty to new institutions.

"We cannot accept the transfer of sovereignty implied by the Delors report," he said.

He also said, "the eventual destination (mapped out in the report) represents a concept of the European Community which we do not share."

The moves would add a new dimension to the European Community's plans to fashion a single market by the end of 1992. By that date, the nations hope to remove the many trade barriers that separate them.

The report said the fashioning of economic unity would give the Common Market more leverage in international negotiations and strengthen its hand in influencing relations between richer and poorer countries.

It said the creation of such a united front must be "viewed as a single process."

"The decision to enter upon the first stage should be a decision to embark on the entire process," it said.

No timetable was offered. Delors told reporters it was "not a matter of timidity... it's a ques-

tion of wisdom."

But he said governments would have to make by the end of this year the initial decisions to go along with the drive.

The key changes suggested in the report focus on monetary policy.

"A monetary union would require a single monetary policy and responsibility for the formulation of this policy would consequently have to be vested in one decision-making body," the report said.

It said the new institution — the European System of Central Banks — would be charged with making and implementing monetary policy as well as managing exchange rate policy.

It would be given the goal of pursuing stable prices.

The report recommended creation of a single currency. Each nation would have to abandon its current currency.

The Common Market now has a monetary unit, called the European Currency Unit. Its use is limited, and its value is based on a basket of the currencies of the member nations.

The report said, "a single currency would clearly demonstrate the irreversibility of the move to monetary union."

A single currency, it said, would have a greater weight in comparison with other world currencies than any individual European currency.

It urged that all 12 of the nations' currencies be linked to the European exchange rate mechanism. Eight currencies already are part of that system, which keeps their values roughly steady within certain bands.

The currencies of Britain, Spain, Greece and Portugal are not part of the linkage.

The report did not press for dramatic changes in economic policies, although it did say decisions should be "placed within an agreed macro-economic framework and be subject to binding procedures and rules."

"This would permit the determination of an overall policy stance for the Community as a whole," it said.

Such a plan, it said, would "avoid unsustainable differences between individual member countries in public sector borrowing requirements."

It also suggested binding rules limiting the size and financing of governments' budget deficits.

Some of the recommendations would require changes in the Treaty of Rome, which sets the legal foundation for the European-wide market in 1992.

Common market members are: Britain, Belgium, France, Germany, Denmark, Luxembourg, Spain, Greece, Italy, Portugal, The Netherlands and Ireland.

Banking reciprocity

Meanwhile, European finance ministers have given a "favourable reception" to revised rules setting out conditions for U.S. and other foreign banks to gain access to the European financial market.

The finance ministers of the 12-nation EC discussed the measures at their monthly meeting in Luxembourg Monday.

Afterward, the trading bloc issued a statement saying the officials "gave a generally favourable reception" to the changes announced last week by Sir Leon Brittan, chief of the Community's financial services sector.

"No ministers were hostile," the statement said.

Lawson told reporters the revisions represented a "very substantial improvement on the original proposals."

"They are not 100 per cent acceptable as they stand but they go a very long way to meeting our concerns," he said.

The fresh proposal, offered by Brittan, covered a "reciprocity" clause in banking rules that American officials fear will be used to keep U.S. banks out of the lucrative European market being formed by the end of 1992.

Under the original plan, a bank granted a license in one of the 12 Common Market nations would be able to operate freely in any of the others. The bank would be required to follow the rules of the country which initially approved the license application.

U.S. and other foreign banks would also be eligible for such a license. But a foreign bank would only be granted the license if European banks were given reciprocal access in that bank's home country.

The license application from a foreign bank could have been held up for as long as three months while the European Commission decided whether to grant it.

U.S. officials have expressed concern about the Community's use of the term "reciprocity." They fear American banks will be subjected to crippling restrictions because U.S. banking rules are much tighter than those in some European countries.

Under Britain's revised plan, license applications from foreign banks would not be considered on a one-by-one basis. Instead, the European Commission would conduct periodic reviews of foreign countries to assess their treatment of European banks.

Brittan said last week that if the review showed that EC banks did not have access to a market, then license applications from that country would be suspended.

The idea of the European-wide market is to reduce the restrictions that keep goods, services, people and money from moving freely among the 12 countries.



A ship is being loaded with Jordanian phosphate at the port of Aqaba (File photo)

Jordan boosts phosphate exports

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordan Phosphate Mines Company (JPMC) has increased its exports of phosphate during the first quarter of 1989, and it has plans for development projects to increase production, JPMC Director-General Wasef Azar announced Tuesday.

Azar said that in the first quarter of 1989 the company's mines produced 1.7 million tonnes of phosphate, registering an increase of 13 per cent over production figures in the same period of last year.

He expressed hope that the company will maintain its production momentum and produce

some seven million tonnes by the end of the year.

According to Azar, the company registered a record figure in phosphate exports so far this year, altogether exporting 1.7 million tonnes against 1.3 million tonnes in the same period of 1988.

The company, he said, increased its production of aluminium fluoride in the first quarter of 1989 and produced 3270 tonnes, an increase of 10 per cent over the same period of last year.

Referring to the Shidieh mine in southern Jordan, Azar said that production at the mine started last year and there is a

programme for producing half a million tonnes of phosphate during 1989, rising to one million in the coming year and three million in 1992.

At present, the JPMC is studying a number of options for carrying out development schemes and increasing its exports and producing certain types of fertilizers that can be used for domestic plants and gardens in the country, Azar noted.

He said that the JPMC lately produced two types of fertilizers to meet the local needs; and it is hoped that these will be available in sufficient quantities in the local markets.

GPA of Ireland places world's biggest commercial aircraft order

PARIS (R) — Irish-based GPA Group Ltd., the world's leading aircraft leasing company, said Tuesday it had ordered 308 new aircraft worth a total \$16.8 billion from three manufacturers.

The order was by far the biggest to be announced on the same day by a single company. The previous record was held by U.S.-based carrier Delta Airlines which last September ordered \$10.5 billion worth of jets from two U.S. suppliers.

GPA said in a statement which was being issued in Paris, London and New York that the biggest part of its order, worth \$9.4 billion, would go to the Boeing Co. of Seattle, Washington, for 92 short-range 737 aircraft, 50 short-to-medium range 757s and

40 medium-range 767s.

From the four-nation European consortium, Airbus Industrie, GPA said it had ordered 30 short-to-medium range A320s and 24 medium-to-long-range A330s and long-range A340s for a total \$4.3 billion.

From McDonnell Douglas Corp., based in St. Louis, Missouri, it had ordered 64 short-to-medium range MD-80s and eight medium-to-long range MD-11s totalling \$3.1 billion.

GPA, a private company based at Shannon Airport, Ireland, and formerly known as Guinness Peat Aviation, said the new business brought its cumulative orders and options for new aircraft to \$19 billion, valued at around \$30 billion.

It said the value of the orders announced Tuesday was based on current list price plus a built-in inflation rate, until delivery, of four per cent annually.

Scheduled delivery dates, were not immediately available.

GPA said the orders would be worth more than \$500 million to British-based aeroengine maker Rolls-Royce PLC which would provide the power plants for the 50 Boeing 757s.

Other engine suppliers would include Franco-American group CFM International, General Electric Co. of the United States, U.S.-West European consortium International Aeroengines and Pratt and Whitney of the United States, GPA said.

Soviet minister unveils new, progressive tax structure

MOSCOW (AP) — The Soviet Union has unveiled a new, progressive income tax with rates as high as 50 per cent for workers who earn more than seven times the average wage.

Finance Minister Boris Gostev said Monday in an interview with the Communist Party newspaper Pravda that the tax structure that will go into effect in January makes the first changes in 46 years.

The tax structure, in the form of a draft law, was published in Pravda Sunday. The draft must be approved by the government before it becomes law.

Soviets now pay a flat 10 per cent of their income in taxes if they make less than 200 rubles (the equivalent of \$320) a month, and the rate increases a few percentage points for higher incomes.

The average industrial worker makes 217 rubles (\$347) a month.

Most taxes are withheld at the workplace, and workers do not need to file annual tax returns.

The new tax structure sets a tax rate of 12.2 per cent for incomes of 700 rubles (\$1,120) a month up to 50 per cent for incomes in excess of 1,500 rubles (\$2,400) a month.

Wage-earners with four or more dependents would be eligible for a tax cut of 30 per cent from the new rates, according to

the published report. Soviet taxpayers who earn money from several different sources now must pay separately on each of the sources. But Gostev said the new law would unify all income sources and require taxpayers to pay on their total income.

It also would include stiff penalties for trying to avoid taxes, he said.

Pol finds farmers way of land leasing

Meanwhile, a poll has shown that collective farmers are wary and confused about new laws permitting them to lease land, but most see the move toward private property as the only cure for the country's agricultural crisis.

The poll of 176 heads of collective farms by the Kursk Agricultural Institute found that only one-fifth believed strongly in leasing and almost half answered, "I have doubts about it, but I just don't see any other way."

Y. Vorobyov, dean of the institute in Kursk, a southwestern Russian city, said many feared that what they could achieve on private land could be lost if the government later reversed its support of leasing.

The two committees set up, one to deal with investment and the other to deal with taxation, follow an earlier agreement to increase cultural and transportation links.

Hungary, Israel move towards commercial ties

TEL AVIV (AP) — Hungarian and Israeli officials have set up two joint committees to improve commercial ties between the two

countries as a step toward normalising diplomatic relations, foreign ministry officials said Monday.

The step was agreed to during the four-day visit of Hungarian Deputy Foreign Minister Laszlo Kovacs that ended Sunday, said the officials who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Kovacs is the highest ranking Hungarian foreign ministry official to visit Israel since Budapest broke off diplomatic ties along with the rest of the East Bloc countries except Romania, after the 1967 Middle East war.

It is widely expected that Hungary, which exchanged interest sections with Israel in March 1988, will be the first Eastern Bloc nation to renew diplomatic relations with Israel.

In his meeting last week with Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens, Kovacs expressed the desire to "accelerate the process of normalisation" between the two countries, the ministry officials said.

The two committees set up, one to deal with investment and the other to deal with taxation, follow an earlier agreement to increase cultural and transportation links.

ECONOMIC NEWS BRIEFS

Ministry raises price of 'Halibona' milk

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Supply has raised the price of milk it imports to be sold at JD 1 per kilogramme up from 720 fils, according to a report in Al Rai Arabic daily Tuesday. The report said that the "Halibona" brand milk has increased in price in the country of origin which rendered the raise in price inevitable here. The report said that even with the new hike in price, the consumer is not paying the cost of the imported Halibona dry instant milk. The report said that the Ministry of Supply still pays a subsidy of 250 fils for each kilogramme. The report also said that the Ministry of Supply was forced to raise the price of cooking fat for similar reasons. A two kilogramme can of the "ghazal" brand now sells for JD 1.25 up from JD 1.03.

CVDB extends eight loans

AMMAN (Petra) — The Cities and Villages Development Bank (CVDB) last month provided eight loans to local councils in the Kingdom totalling JD 330,000 to help them carry out projects and improve services. The bank said in a statistical bulletin that it last month concluded a total of 17 loan agreements worth JD 276,000 which will be offered to the councils at a later stage. According to the statement, the loans are being used to open roads and improve services in rural areas.

Oman's biggest bank raises profits

MUSCAT (R) — Oman International Bank, the country's biggest, increased its net profits in calendar 1988 by about 12 per cent despite heavier provisions against bad loans. A bank spokesman said profits totalled 753,000 riyals (\$1.96 million), while total assets rose by about 18 per cent to 163.95 million riyals (\$426 million). The bank set aside 4.7 million riyals (\$12.2 million) in provisions for bad loans against 2.06 million (\$5.35 million) in 1987. The spokesman said bank chairman Omar bin Abdul Munim Al Zawawi told shareholders that the bank's treasury operations and income from commissions performed well despite growing competition. A jump of 32 per cent in deposits by customers also helped profits, he said. The bank is 100 per cent Omani-owned.

IBM reports slight rise in earnings

ARMONK, New York (R) — International Business Machines Corp (IBM) regarded as a key indicator among U.S. industrial companies, Friday reported a slight rise in first-quarter earnings of 1.8 per cent to \$950 million. "Worldwide demand across our product line continues to be good," the company said. "Our first-quarter results improved despite a short-term chip shortage that affected some large system shipments." IBM said its expectations for 1989 remained unchanged. Wall Street, which sees IBM as a key indicator of how other industrial companies are faring, was pleased with the results. Revenues increased 5.6 per cent to \$12.73 billion from \$12.06 billion in 1988's initial quarter. Analysts said there are some signs that domestic order rates for the computer industry may be improving and overseas sales continue to be strong.

Ethiopia gets loan to improve port

WASHINGTON (AP) — Ethiopia, often threatened by hunger, will get a \$72-million loan from the World Bank on easy terms, designed to make imports of food and other goods easier by improving the Red Sea port of Assab. An announcement by the bank said the money would go to build two berths and cargo handling equipment, and for the replacement or repair of cranes. Exports as well as imports are expected to be helped. The loan is for 40 years, including a 10-year grace period during which only interest of less than one per cent will be due.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Tuesday, April 18, 1989					
Central Bank official rates					
	Buy	Sell			
U.S. dollar	538.0	542.0	French franc	85.3	86.1
Pound Sterling	918.4	928.2	Japanese yen (for 100)	406.9	410.8
Deutsche mark	288.7	291.6	Dutch guilder	255.9	258.3
Swiss franc	327.9	331.8	Swedish crown	84.8	85.6
			Italian lira (for 100)	39.3	39.7
			Belgian franc (for 10)	137.9	139.2

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midday on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Tuesday.

One Sterling	1.7080/90	U.S. dollar	
One U.S. dollar	1.8555/65	Canadian dollar	
	1.8638/45	Deutsche mark	
	2.1025/35	Dutch guilder	
	1.6387/97	Swiss franc	
	39.00/3	Belgian franc	
	6.3075/125	French franc	
	1367/1368	Italian lire	
	132.15/25	Japanese yen	
	6.3450/500	Swedish crown	
	6.7690/740	Norwegian crowns	
	7.2530/80	Danish crowns	
One ounce of gold	385.30/385.60	U.S. dollars	

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

By Reuters

SYDNEY — Prices closed slightly firmer over though Australia's current account deficit for March was larger than expected. The All Ordinaries index rose 1.7 to 1,421.4.

TOKYO — Prices fluctuated in a narrow range and closed mixed with many investors awaiting inflation indicators from both Japan and the United States. The Nikkei index was up 13.33 at 33,321.66.

HONG KONG — Most institutions stayed on the sidelines ahead of U.S. inflation indicators but retail-dominated stocks made marginal gains. The Hang Seng index rose 1.45 to 3,135.43.

SINGAPORE — Prices closed narrowly mixed after hectic afternoon trading when speculative buyers returned to the market to reverse earlier profit-taking. The Straits Times industrial index was down 0.76 at 1,257.57.

BOMBAY — Stock market closed for Mahavira Jayanti holiday.

FRANKFURT — Shares ended trade narrowly mixed as the recent surge in prices ran out of steam while profit-taking remained limited. The DAX index ended a mere 0.48 points down at 1,394.14.

ZURICH — Share prices ended a quiet session steady to slightly higher with demand centred on selected factors. Today's rise in Swiss interest rates was seen as a negative factor.

PARIS — Share prices extended opening losses by the midsession but in moderate volume with many operators taking to the sidelines. The Cote index was down 0.46 per cent at midsession, extending an opening drop of 0.26 per cent.

LONDON — Shares reached the day's highs on relief that U.S. inflation data was in line with forecasts and that U.S. March housing starts were lower than anticipated. At 1313 GMT the FTSE 100 index touched a peak of 2,073.8, up 19.1 points.

NEW YORK — Stocks showed strong gains throughout the list but paused at their higher levels. They jumped following news that the March consumer index rose 0.5 per cent. The Dow rose 22 to 2,360.

Executive Opportunities

MANIS Management Consultants, the leading Jordanian management consulting firm, is conducting the following executive search for a leader in household appliances and goods. Our client is looking for several key executives to join them in expanding their market share and adding new businesses.

Director Marketing

The Director of Marketing will implement a new market strategy for Jordan and selected export markets, having accountability for local and export sales. Candidates will have an MBA from a first rate US or European business school, a BA/BSc in economics or engineering and at least 3-5 years of consumer products marketing experience.

Director Corporate Planning

The Director of Corporate Planning will be accountable for implementing a growth-oriented business strategy and for developing corporate and divisional plans. Candidates will have an MBA in marketing or finance from a first rate US or European business school, with at least 3-5 years of business planning experience.

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The Director of Engineering and Product Development will be accountable for developing new products and for upgrading current products to meet consumer demands. He/She will also be responsible for improving the current manufacturing process through the use of recognized industrial engineering techniques. Candidates will have an MSc degree in mechanical engineering from a first rate US or European university and 5-10 years of experience in a consumer products company.

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Wojciech Jaruzelski



Lech Walesa

Jaruzelski, Walesa seal reconciliation

WARSAW (R) Poland's Communist leader General Wojciech Jaruzelski and Solidarity leader Lech Walesa met Tuesday for talks that set the seal on a new era of national reconciliation in Poland. The two leaders met in the Sejny (parliament) a day after a Warsaw court restored the Solidarity trade union's legality following an historic government-opposition pact introducing a radical liberalisation programme.

Jaruzelski and Walesa last met in November 1981, in an abortive attempt to seek a reconciliation, a month before Jaruzelski imposed martial law in a bid to crush the communist world's first free trade union.

Tuesday's meeting was billed by officials as a symbolic encounter capping a process of reconciliation that has changed the face of Polish politics in the space of a few months and set the country on the road to parliamentary democracy.

Jaruzelski and Walesa met in the company of about 30 top government, Communist Party and Solidarity officials holding the first session of a co-ordinating committee set up to monitor im-

plementation of the government-opposition reform pact.

Walesa, who heads the opposition team on the committee, was in the Sejny when Jaruzelski arrived in a dark suit escorted by Politburo member Stanislaw Ciolek and Prime Minister Mieczyslaw Rakowski.

Under the reforms, the Solidarity-led opposition will enter the Sejny for the first time in elections next June with 35 per cent of the seats. It will also run for a new democratically-elected senate created under the reforms.

Poland Tuesday gave a cautious welcome to economic help offered by U.S. President George Bush to encourage its reform programme.

A government spokesman called the package a positive and appropriate step but said Poland wanted to see what it meant in practice before giving a final assessment.

Bush's proposals appeared to clear away the last obstacles to normal relations between the two countries remaining from the era of economic sanctions slapped on Poland by Washington in response to martial law.

Peking students demand freedom

PEKING (AP) — Thousands of Peking students staged a daylong demonstration in Tiananmen square, near China's seat of power, Tuesday to mourn the death of a reformist leader and demand greater democracy.

Students from several universities also staged a sit-in in front of the Great Hall of the People just off the square, refusing to leave until a top official appeared to discuss their demands.

By late afternoon, the number participating in the sit-in to demand the incomes of leaders to freedom of speech had swelled to nearly 1,000.

They were surrounded by a crush of thousands of curious Chinese workers and peasants, many from outside Peking, who were visiting Tiananmen Square, China's symbolic centre of power and a main tourist attraction.

Students from at least five Peking universities paraded to the square during the day behind banners and wreaths dedicated to former Communist Party chief Hu Yaobang, who died a heart attack Saturday at age 73.

Hu was considered a champion of the rights of intellectuals and was forced to resign in early 1987 after party conservatives accused him of failing to take harsh measures against pro-democracy student demonstrations during December 1986 and January 1987.

Tuesday's marches became increasingly political in nature as the day went on, with students

chanting, "long live democracy, down with dictatorship, overthrow bureaucracy, down with corruption."

After a smaller march to Tiananmen to lay a wreath for Hu Monday afternoon, nearly 1,500 students from Peking University left their campus in northwestern Peking at about 1 a.m. Tuesday.

Nearly 500 students from the People's University joined them en route for a four-hour trek by foot and bicycle to Tiananmen. There, leaders placed a 5-metre banner in Hu's honour on a monument to revolutionary heroes.

Students from Qinghua University, a prominent engineering school; the Nationalities University; the Peking School of Economics and others also marched into the square, with Qinghua students surging past security to hand a wreath to officials inside the Great Hall.

Police kept a low profile throughout the day, and made no effort to stop the demonstrations. Students in Shanghai also marched on the Communist Party headquarters Monday night with a wreath honouring Hu.

Leaders of the sit-in, which began early Tuesday with about 200 students, presented a list of seven demands, including reassessment of the disgraced Hu, freedom of speech and press, more money for education, and disclosure of the incomes of leaders.

Khrushchev hailed as perestroika godfather

By Robert Evans

Reuters

MOSCOW — Late Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev, written out of official history for two decades, has been hailed at a mass Moscow meeting as the man who sowed the seeds for Mikhail Gorbachev's "perestroika" reforms.

Some 2,000 people marking the 45th anniversary of Khrushchev's birth heard survivors of Josef Stalin's labour camps and intellectuals persecuted under Leonid Brezhnev say on Sunday night that current reforms would have been impossible without him.

But historian Roy Medvedev, recently elected to the new-style Soviet parliament, told the gathering in a hall near the Kremlin that Khrushchev's fall in 1964 provided a lesson that "dark forces" constantly fought to prevent genuine change.

"None of us in the camps would have believed that out of the ruins of Stalin there would be a man who would shake the system of Stalinism out of moral conviction, but Khrushchev did," said former prisoner Lev Razgon.

"The generation of today as well as the millions he freed from the camps owe him an eternal debt of gratitude. He made possi-

ble what is happening in our country now."

Economist Gavrill Popov told the meeting, organised by the Cinema Workers' Union, that Khrushchev had been the first leader to attack the Communist Party's monopoly on power and to extend the rights of peasants.

"It is a monument to Khrushchev that the leaders of perestroika (restructuring) are people who were formed in his time," Popov said to stormy applause.

American historian and Sovietologist Stephen Cohen, a frequent visitor to Moscow after being barred for many years, told the audience Khrushchev had not failed when he was ousted in a Kremlin coup led by Brezhnev in 1964.

"Khrushchev was the father of the anti-Stalinist movement within the party and that became the driving force of perestroika today," Cohen said. "Without Nikita Sergeyevich (Khrushchev) there could have been no Mikhail Sergeyevich (Gorbachev)."

Khrushchev became effective Kremlin number one a few months after Stalin's death in 1953. In 1956 he made a secret speech at the party's 20th congress denouncing the dictator's bloody rule and turned the country towards a new vision of communism.

Search continues for missing persons after clashes

Troops leave Georgia; curfew lifted

MOSCOW (Agencies) — Troops left the Georgian capital Tbilisi early Tuesday and an overnight curfew was lifted as life in the city returned to normal after clashes between troops and demonstrators which killed 19 people.

A journalist at the Georgian news agency Gruzinform said Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, sent to his home republic last week to help restore order, was also due to fly back to Moscow later Tuesday.

"Our mood today is as good as the weather," the journalist told Reuters. "The troops started withdrawing at five o'clock Tuesday morning the moment the curfew was lifted. There are now no troops at all in the city."

He said a parliamentary commission had also been set up to investigate the events of April 9,

when troops used clubs and, according to some reports, sharpened shovels to break up a nationalist demonstration in central Tbilisi.

Sixteen people, the majority of them women, were killed outright during the demonstration in front of the government and party headquarters. Another three died later in hospital.

Reports from Tbilisi said city institutions were working normally again Tuesday and lessons had resumed at colleges of higher education.

Moscow Radio said the Georgian Communist Party's ruling Politburo, in an address published in local newspapers, urged people to show wisdom and prudence, to show that they can ensure order in their own home through their own efforts.

"Now tomorrow's fate depends on us alone, on our readiness for action, discipline and responsibility," it said.

Special public order task forces were being set up by police and citizens across the republic to maintain order now that troops had been withdrawn, Georgian Interior Minister Shota Gorgodze said.

"Around 4,000 people are helping the ministry in this undertaking," Gorgodze told the official Soviet news agency TASS. "Order will be maintained."

The apparent return to calm

indicated considerable success for Shevardnadze, a former Georgian party leader who won praise for his handling of student nationalist unrest in 1978 and 1981 when he was running the republic.

Apart from overseeing a reshuffle of the Georgian Communist Party and state leadership, he also met intellectuals and talked to local people.

Although there were no more demonstrations on the city's streets, Georgian nationalist activists said the demands for greater autonomy and even independence which sparked last week's protests remained unsatisfied.

Four leading members of nationalist groups were still detained, they said.

"Everything is being normal-

ised in the city but the basic demands remain," said Mamuka Gamsakhurdia, wife of detained nationalist Zviad Gamsakhurdia.

Search for missing

Authorities Tuesday continued a search for 14 people reported missing after the clashes.

Lea Umanishvili, chief editor of Georgian Television in Tbilisi said the Ministry of Health still was searching for 14 people listed as missing after the clash. The list consists of three or four boys age 11-13, two women, and the rest men, she said.

Officials announced Monday that three people previously regarded as missing had been found, but provided no information about them, she said.



Fonda looks at separation positively

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Two-time Academy Award-winner Jane Fonda is trying to look at her separation from Tom Hayden in a positive light. "It would be dishonest to say that every day is joyous, but it's also dishonest to say I'm just plodding along," she said in an interview with the Los Angeles Times. "I'm somewhat on a roller coaster. Actually, I feel pretty good." Fonda, 51, and Hayden, 49, announced in February they had separated on a trial basis after 16 years of a marriage spawned by the radical anti-war politics of the 1960s. Hayden said their son, Troy, 15, has helped them keep in touch. Fonda also has a daughter, Vanessa, 20, from a previous marriage to film director Roger Vadim. "If you realise you are good parents, you know you are good friends and you know you're not going to lose everything from 16 years, that's important," Hayden said.

Ex-reporter wins \$6 million

SHEBOYGAN, Wisconsin (AP) — The cash would have come in handy in the 1960s, when he adopted nine orphans and had five of his own children, but a former reporter says he will retire for good after winning \$6 million in the Michigan lottery. Chuck Fisher, 62, said last week he plans to leave his job as assistant to the director of the Michigan Department of Transportation and settle down with his winnings. In the early 1960s, he and his wife, Kerry, adopted nine children whose father had died falling from a ladder.

Doctor advises parents should relax

CHICAGO (AP) — Dr. Benjamin Spock, the 86-year-old patriarch of child-care advice, says parents should relax so their children can. "Children respond to the tensions in parents, not the tensions in society," the white bearded physician and child psychiatrist said Saturday. "We've got to take the pressure off kids." Spock was in Chicago to open a field museum of natural history exhibition on families. He told parents they should teach their children the spirit of cooperation. Parents also should work toward eliminating grades in school and try to turn politicians' attention to issues like funding for day care, schools and health care, said Spock, whose book "Baby and Child Care" has sold 32 million copies since 1945 and has been translated into 31 languages.

'Golden Girls' marks 100th episode

LOS ANGELES (AP) — It was "The Golden Girls" big night out and the now-closed coconut grove nightclub was returned to its one-time splendor for a black-tie gala to celebrate the popular television comedy's 100th episode. The show's stars, Bea Arthur, Estelle Getty, Rue McClanahan and Betty White, joined Walt Disney Studio's chief Michael Eisner, National Broadcasting Company President Brandon Tartikoff and several hundred staff members and associates Saturday night in toasting the Emmy Award-winning programme. "It's not only a show that has the four best actresses on television, it truly is the best programme in television in the last decade or two," said Eisner, whose company distributes the series. "Thank you for this wonderful celebration. We deserve it," said Getty, who plays the feisty Sophia. "It's been a wonderful four years and I look forward to four more." Tartikoff credited the show for helping boost NBC to the top of the ratings during the past four years.

Global weather (major world cities)

	MIN.	MAX.	WIND	WEATHER
AMSTERDAM	10	15	10	Cloudy
ATHENS	12	24	7	Clear
BAHRAIN	23	32	30	Cloudy
BANGKOK	28	32	36	Clear
Buenos Aires	18	24	7	Clear
CAIRO	12	24	8	Clear
CHICAGO	14	40	15	Clear
COPENHAGEN	02	25	41	Rain
FRANKFURT	01	34	10	Cloudy
GENEVA	05	41	10	Snow
HONG KONG	21	29	7	Cloudy
ISTANBUL	12	22	20	Clear
LONDON	05	17	15	Clear
LOS ANGELES	16	60	22	Cloudy
MADRID	09	37	18	Clear
MECCA	26	74	10	Cloudy
MIAMI	22	75	7	Cloudy
MONTREAL	-02	26	17	Cloudy
MOSCOW	04	36	48	Cloudy
NEW DELHI	21	70	28	Clear
NEW YORK	07	45	23	Cloudy
PARIS	08	44	17	Cloudy
ROME	04	40	20	Clear
TOKYO	13	55	22	Clear
VIENNA	05	41	30	Cloudy

'Gifts' get Wright into hot water with ethics panel

WASHINGTON (AP) — Ethics charges against House of Representatives Speaker Jim Wright include new details about how he sold thousands of copies of his book to special-interest groups, and several colleagues called the deals the most troubling of 69 charges against the Texas Democrat.

In one case, a March 1986 speech to the fertilizer institute, the trade group planned to give Wright a plaque or a small gift in return for his appearance.

But Wright's office arranged instead for the group to buy \$2,023 worth of books, yielding the congressman \$1,112 in royalty income. The book is called "Reflections of a Public Man."

Wright is one of the top two

congressional leaders and the ruler of the opposition Democratic Party majority in the House.

House members are limited by the rules to accepting no more than 30 per cent of their salaries in outside speaking fees. The House Ethics Panel found reason to believe that Wright circumvented that limit by converting speech honoraria into book royalties, which are exempt from the limits.

In two other cases — a speech to the Ocean Spray Cranberry Organisation in the fall of 1985, and a speech in March 1986 to the Mid-Continent Oil and Gas Association — Wright sold books instead of collecting speaking fees, and was given the books to distribute as he saw fit. The Ethics Committee saw those as unreported gifts to the speaker.

"My view is that count one (dealing with the book sales) is the most serious issue," said Democratic Representative Steny Hoyer of Maryland, vice chairman of the House Democratic Caucus, the Organisation of all 261 House Democrats.

"It's a bad day. It looks rotten. But at some point in time, the facts do make a difference" and will help the speaker, he said.

Wright was scheduled Tuesday to go before the caucus — which ultimately must decide whether to keep him in his post as the party's most visible official — to begin his defence against the 69

ethics charges filed against him Monday by the ethics panel.

While scandal has tainted other House speakers, Wright is the first ever to be formally charged with ethical wrongdoing.

The speaker's problems were the number one topic of conversation on the House floor, but lawmakers were reacting cautiously in public to Monday's formal filing of charges against Wright, the equivalent of an indictment.

"I think we have a responsibility to keep our minds open and our mouths shut until we have an opportunity to read the report," said Democratic Representative David Obey of Wisconsin, who wrote many of the rules Wright is charged with violating.

"We learned that the charges are not trivial, they are not technical, and they are not aimed at his wife," as Wright had argued last week, said Republican Representative Vin Weber of Minnesota, a close ally of Georgia Representative Newt Gingrich, whose complaint last May launched the Wright investigation.

Republicans were going out of their way not to lambaste Wright, fearing that to do so would only make it easier for the speaker to rally Democrats against what he has portrayed as a partisan vendetta. Instead, Republicans simply pointed to the ethics panel's unanimous bipartisan vote to issue the formal statement of charges against Wright.

Tamils name envoy for peace talks

COLOMBO (AP) — The Tamil Tigers, who have been waging a separatist war against the Sinhalese majority for the past six years, have appointed a Sri Lankan-born British Tamil to start peace talks with the government, government officials and Tamil sources said Tuesday.

Anton Balasingham, recently named head of the political section of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, was expected to arrive in Colombo from London in the next few days, sources close to the Tiger guerrillas said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

In a surprise move over the

weekend, the Tigers declared they were ready to begin talks with President Ranasinghe Premadasa. The declaration, made in a letter to the president and telecast to Colombo newspapers, came after the Tigers were blamed for three days of bombings that killed at least 79 people.

So far there has been no explanation for the sudden change of heart by the largest Tamil guerrilla group.

The Tamil sources said Balasingham's first mission is to talk with the government about a time and place for the talks. After that, he will be a member of the

Tigers' negotiating team, the sources added.

Evans Cooray, Premadasa's press secretary, said the president's office was notified shortly before midnight Monday that Balasingham had been designated to make arrangements for the talks. Cooray said the message was contained in a telex from the Tigers' information office in London.

Premadasa, who took office in January, had offered to start talks with both the Tigers and Sinhalese radicals about ending the ethnic bloodshed that has claimed more than 12,000 lives in

this once-idyllic Indian Ocean island since 1983.

The Sinhalese radicals, whose group is called the People's Liberation Front, have not responded to the Sinhalese president's call.

Sinhalese have dominated Sri Lanka's government and military since the island, formerly called Ceylon, became independent from Britain in 1948. Mostly Buddhists, they make up 75 per cent of the country's 16 million people.

Tamils, who are mostly Hindus, comprise 18 per cent and say they are discriminated against in jobs and education.



Andreas Papandreu

Papandreu takes Time to court

NEW YORK (AP) — Greek Premier Andreas Papandreu filed a libel suit Monday in London accusing U.S.-based Time Magazine of defaming him in a cover story that said he took millions of dollars in payoffs, his American lawyer said.

Leonard Boudin said it was decided to file the suit in London because the story was more damaging abroad than in the United States. He also said a public figure could make a case more easily under English libel law than American law.

In England, Papandreu need only show the story written about him was defamatory and injured his reputation, while the magazine has the task of proving that what it wrote was true, Boudin said.

In the United States, Papandreu would have to show not only that Time lied, but that it acted with malice, meaning the magazine did not care whether its accusations were true or false.

Boudin said Papandreu still could sue in other places where the magazine circulates and he believed malice could be established if necessary.

He said Papandreu has not yet decided how much money would be demanded, but added that clearing Papandreu's name was the prime consideration.

The suit was launched only after the magazine failed to respond to a demand for an public apology and retraction, Boudin said.

The suit names as defendants Time-Life International Limited of London, Time-Life International BV of Amsterdam, the Time Incorporated Magazine Company of New York and the writer of the article, Robert Ajemian.

Brian Brown, a spokesman designated to comment in Time's behalf, did not immediately return a call.

Papandreu's lawsuit cites the cover story that appeared in the magazine's international edition of March 13, which read: "The Looting of Greece. From his cell, a fallen tycoon charges Papandreu with stealing millions."

Algeria expels ETA guerrillas

MADRID (R) — Six Basque separatist guerrillas, including three who took part in secret talks with the Spanish government in Algiers, have been expelled from Algeria, Spain's Interior Ministry said Tuesday.

A spokesman said the six bad left Algiers Tuesday on a Spanish air force plane and were heading for the Dominican Republic.

The six included Eugenio Etxebarria "Antxon," who led the Basque delegation to the Algiers talks earlier this year. The spokesman named the others as Ignacio Aracana Mendilla, Maria-Belen Gonzalez Penalba — who both attended the Algiers talks — Angel Irujo Abasolo, Juan Manuel Suarez Gamboa — who headed a Madrid commando — and Jose Maria Ganchequi Aruti.

The radical newspaper Egin, which has close links with ETA (Basque Homeland and Freedom), said Tuesday that Spain and France were putting pressure on Algeria to expel some of the estimated 50 guerrillas living there in exile.

The move by Algiers follows a new offensive by ETA this month

after they ended an unprecedented three-month truce, accusing the government of going back on an agreement reached at secret talks in Algiers.

Since then the guerrillas have resumed their 21-year-old campaign for an independent Basque state and have stepped up their attacks, sending letter bombs to officials and bombing railway lines.

A spokesman for the state railway company Renfe said the main train links to Europe had been shut early Tuesday following new threats from ETA.

He said the Madrid-Barcelona, Madrid-Zaragoza and Madrid-Burgos lines were closed while civil guards scoured the rails looking for bombs.

ETA announced Monday that it had put bombs on those lines and warned they would explode between Monday and next Sunday.

The Renfe spokesman said the lines, which serve the whole of northeastern Spain and link the peninsula with Europe, would remain closed until the deadline expired at midnight Sunday.

S. Korea police storm factories, arrest 175

SEOUL (AP) — Korean riot police firing tear gas stormed four factories held by strikers Tuesday and arrested 175 workers as the government warned it would use troops to keep vital industries running if labour unrest spread.

Police officials said riot troops seized four factories at dawn Tuesday in Puchon on the western outskirts of Seoul after strikers refused to surrender. Some strikers hurled firebombs and rocks at the riot police, but police officials said they had no reports of serious injuries.

The factories seized produced electronic parts and machinery. The government has warned that a growing wave of strikes threatens South Korea's political stability and the economy. Thousands of workers are pressing for higher wages, better working conditions and other concessions.

Students calling for the over-

throw of President Roh Tae-Woo's government held campus protests in Seoul and other cities Tuesday on the eve of the anniversary of an April 19, 1960, student uprising. Some 18,000 riot police were mobilised in Seoul to prevent violent protests, officials said.

Riot police stormed the Seoul office of a government lawmaker Tuesday and overpowered eight students who had attacked the office with firebombs and then occupied it, officials said.

Prime Minister Kang Young-Hoon and key government ministers issued orders Tuesday to use troops and military equipment to keep vital industries running. Kang said dissidents fomenting labour unrest would be sternly punished.

Officials said troops would operate power plants, defence factories and other facilities if necessary,



Dead sea otters being prepared for autopsy

Experts sceptical about spill cleanup

VALDEZ, Alaska (AP) — Imagine a road about 590 kilometres long, 9 metres wide and coated with 15,900 litres of oil black slime per kilometre. Now stop the goop onto remote beaches and coasts along Prince William Sound.

The Exxon Valdez tanker wreck has left about that much oil on the sound's once pristine shoreline. And the giant corporation would federal approval Monday for a plan to clean up most of it.

But the ambitious strategy to clean up 490 kilometres faces sharp scepticism and new demands that it be broadened to include other polluted areas. Some officials just smiled sadly when asked its chance of success.

The plan calls for a mobilisation by early June of 4,000 people and scores of vessels. By Sept. 15, they're supposed to erase the tarry remains of the nation's worst oil spill from the rocky beaches of one of the world's richest regions for fish and wildlife.

Admiral Paul Yost, the head of the coast guard, approved the proposal Monday. But he wondered if Exxon could meet its goals in the face of the sound's notorious weather and the limited time available.

"I'm concerned whether the level of activity can be kept up through the summer to complete cleanup," said Yost, who demanded the plan last week.

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, described it as barely adequate.

"It needs more work," he said, adding it would be next week before he would comment on whether he believed it would work.

Yost, overseeing the cleanup at U.S. President George Bush's direction, listened to the concerns of Ketchikan and other state officials. He then gave Exxon until May 1 to come up with plans to deal with oil contamination outside the sound and disposal of oily waste.

"The plan will be expanded to add in these other concerns," said Exxon spokesman Don Cornett.

But Exxon consultant Ed Owens said that initially, more time would be spent on training